

DIVINE AVENGER:

OR, THE

FATAL CONSEQUENCES

O F

M U R D E R;

Exemplified in the following Tragical Relations:

- I. Of a Nobleman of *Burgundy*, who falling in Love with a Lady at Church, marries her; and living very happily, his Sister envies them, and contrives their Ruin by fomenting Jealousies betwixt them; which occasions a Duel betwixt him and another Gentleman; which not succeeding to her Wish, she poisons her Sister-in-law, and then her Brother; for which she is tried, hang'd, burn'd, and her Ashes thrown into the Air.
- II. Of a Gentleman of *Venice*, who first by himself, and then by his Friend, solicits the Love of a Lady of *Milan*. She falls desperately in Love with, and marries his Friend; which the Gentleman resenting, challenges, fights, and kills the Husband; in Revenge for which she employs two Ruffians to kill him; this being discover'd, she is hang'd, burnt, and her Ashes scatter'd in the Air.
- III. Of a *French* Nobleman, who falling in Love with a Farmer's Daughter, debauches her, and then causes her and her Infant to be murder'd, to make Way for his Preferment in Marriage to a Lady of a great Family and Fortune. His Villainy being discover'd, he is broke alive, and his Accomplices suffer the most ignominious Deaths.
- IV. Of a Gentleman and Lady of *Valentia*, who entertaining a mutual Love for each other, she to secure him her own, causes his Rival to be murder'd. They are married; but she giving him Cause of Jealousy, he murders her and her Paramour. This occasions a Duel between him and the Brother of her first Loyer, in which he treacherously kills him; for which he is tried, confesses the former Murder, and is executed.
- V. Of a *Venetian*, who murdered his Wife because she was old; for which he is tried and convicted on the Evidence of his own Daughter, and at last executed.

Embellish'd with several curious Copper-Plate Cuts
adapted to the Work.

L O N D O N:

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The HISTORY of
Grand-Pre and Mermanda.

NUMB. I.

IN the Kingdom of France, near the City of Auxone, upon the Frontiers of Burgundy, lived Monsieur de Grandmont, a Gentleman of an ancient and noble Family, and of an extraordinary Character, who had to his Wife Mademoiselle de Carny, the only Daughter of Monsieur de Buserat, a worthy Gentleman of the City of Dole; a Lady as remarkable for her Virtue and other excellent Accomplishments, as for the exceeding Beauty of her Person. This married Couple lived long in perfect Content and mutual Happiness, the constant Attendants of Virtue and Love founded on Reason; their Estate encreasing, even beyond their greatest Expectations, as a Reward for their Goodness. And at last, to compleat their Happiness, they were blest with three Sons, Grand-Pre, Vileneuf, and Masseron; and two Daughters, named Mademoiselle de Hautevelia, and de Cressye. These five Children, their own natural Parts being assisted by the best Instructions, and their Behaviour influenc'd by their Parents good Example, advanced in Virtue and Knowledge as much as Years; and, if one cou'd judge from their Number, seem'd to promise a succeeding numerous Race; but the Providence of God that over-rules all Actions and their Events, ordained the Contrary.

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Grand-Pre, the Eldest, being of a warlike Disposition, with his Father's leave, enter'd himself into the Army, under the Command of that brave General, *Grave Maurice*, then Earl of *Nassau*, since Prince of *Orange*. *Vileneuf* delighting in Books, was sent by his Father to study at *Pont-au Mousson*: But the old Gentleman designed his youngest Son, *Masseron*, shou'd live at home with him; however, he at last, tho' with great unwillingness, parted with him, at the earnest Request of that noble Marshal of *France*, who so bravely but unfortunately lost his Head in the *Bastile* of *Paris*; who, taking a particular Fancy to him on account of his Beauty, desired to have him for his Page.

As for their two Daughters; *Hauteselia* lived with her Parents; and *de Cressye*, they presented to a great Lady of *Burgundy*, whose vast Riches and Honours cou'd not preserve her from the violent Grief with which she was afflicted for the Death of her Husband, and Son the Baron of *Lux*; who, in a Campaign were both kill'd by that generous and brave Prince of *Lorain*, the Duke of *Guise*.

But now observe the Inconstancy of Fortune, or rather the Power and Will of Heaven, which can soon change our Mirth into Mourning, our Joys into Tears, and our Hopes into Despair; for within the space of one Year, of these five Children but two remained alive. *Vileneuf* was drowned at *Pont-au Mousson*, as he was bathing himself in the River: *Masseron* was killed in a Duel at *Fontainebleau* by *Rossat*, a *Gascon*, Page to the Duke of *Espernon*: And *Hauteselia* died at home with her Parents of a violent Fever.

Grandmont and *de Carny* his Wife, being thus afflicted at so great a Loss as the Death of three of their Children, resolve to call home the other two, to be a Pleasure and Comfort to them in their old Age; but in this their Hopes sadly deceiv'd them. From whence we may observe with how little Certainty we can rely on any Thing on this side the Grave; and that very often those very Things or Persons, on which we foolishly imagine our chief Happiness and Pleasure depend, are the Cause of our greatest Troubles and Misfortunes. First from the Baroness of *Lux* comes *de Cressye*; who succeeding her Sister, we shall in the Sequel of this History call by the Name of *Hauteselia*; soon after her comes *Grand-Pre* from *Holland*,

land, where, (in several Services) he had left behind him many particular and honourable Marks of his Courage and Valour.

Immediately upon his Arrival, the chief of the Nobility and Gentry come to condole with him, and express their mutual Concern for the Death of his Brothers and Sister, as well as to congratulate him upon his safe and happy Return, and, according to custom, load him with Compliments, which generally proceed more from Civility and Complaisance, than Friendship and Esteem. However, they find their greatest Praises are not undeservedly bestowed on *Grand-Pre*; for he appears in the Opinion of them all, which secures him from a partial Judgment, a perfect Gentleman. But his Qualifications consist not in outward Shew and Grandeur, too often mistaken for real Worth, but in inward Generosity and true Greatness of Spirit; not in the idle and ridiculous Foppery of Dress and Fashions, but in the more manly and noble Perfections of Mind and Body. His Inclination is wholly turned to the Exercise of War, and not to the more modern Arts of Gallantry, and seducing unwary Innocence; being perfectly sensible that the one will bring him lasting Honour and true Glory, but the other lasting Shame and sad Repentance. His Diversions are not Balls and Plays, Dancing and Assemblies, where Vice triumphs, and Virtue is too often put to Shame; and his Behaviour is quite opposite to our modern fine Gentlemen, and young gay Courtiers, who think no Pleasure to be compared to fine Dress and grand Appearance, and no Happiness like their Mistress's Favour, and who is perhaps as remarkable an Example of Pride and Ill-nature, as Folly and Ignorance. His only Exercise and Pleasure is riding the great Horse, displaying Colours, handling the Pike, exercising the Musket, and making himself perfect in the whole Art of War. The sweet Sound of the soft Flute and melodious Violin, are intirely disagreeable to him, who esteems no Music like the rattling of Drums, the Sound of Trumpets, and the thundering of Cannons. But this warlike and martial Spirit will be found not lasting, tho' seemingly so deeply rooted; which may serve to shew the Weakness of our Thoughts, the Inconstancy of our Delights, and the Incertainty of our Resolutions. We shall soon see *Grand-Pre* so perfectly vanquished by an agreeable Beauty, as to leave War for Peace, Arms for Love, and Enemies for a Mistress. But time alone can cause this surprizing Alteration.

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The old Gentleman his Father, observing this warlike Disposition in his Son *Grand-Pre*, is fearful lest his aspiring and ambitious Temper shou'd induce him to seek Wars abroad in foreign Countries, as there are none in his own; and therefore, being desirous of his Presence and Company to sweeten his former Afflictions, and give Life to his future Hopes and Content, profers him the Choice of a Wife among many rich and beautiful young Ladies, of the best and most ancient Families in the Kingdom; but *Grand-Pre* is deaf to these Proposals and Intreaties, and thinks 'twould cast a Blemish on his Valour and Honour to hearken to them. His Father perceiving his Resolution, thought of another Invention; which was, in the Winter to leave the Country, and reside in the City of *Dijon*; (famous as well for the ancient Seat of the Dukes of *Burgundy*, as for the present Court of Parliament) hoping, that amongst the vast Number of beautiful and agreeable Ladies, with which that City is adorned, his Son *Grand-Pre* might find out one more deserving than the rest to engage his Affections; and at last, his Expectations were not disappointed.

One *Sunday* Morning in *Lent*, as *Grand-Pre* went to the Royal Chapel to hear Father *Justinian* (a Capuchin Friar) preach, he observed opposite to him a tall young Lady, whose rich Dress served only to set off her extraordinary Beauty, which appeared in a more particular Manner conspicuous by her modest and graceful Behaviour: In short, she appeared so amiable and so lovely, so charming and so perfectly agreeable to him, that he cou'd not help feeling an unusual Emotion in his Heart, which caused so sudden a Confusion in him, as is impossible to be described, and those alone can have any tolerable Idea of, who have met with the like unexpected, but pleasing Surprise.

By this Time, the young Lady could not help taking Notice, with what Earnestness and Delight *Grand-Pre* look'd at her; and observing him to appear an agreeable young Gentleman, richly dress'd, and attended by a Footman, a Grandeur perfectly agreeable to the aspiring Desires and Ambition of the Ladies, immediately dy'd her lilly Cheeks with a rosy Blush, which gave such an additional Grace to her Beauty, that *Grand-Pre* cou'd no longer resist the powerful Influence of so sweet a Charm. And now is the Time that his Passions and Affection prevail
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over his former Thoughts and weak Resolutions, and his stubborn Heart submits to Love. He no longer persists in the Prejudice he had conceived against the Power and Dignity of Love; but, in Opposition to his former Opinion, which he now thinks erroneous, esteems no Happiness or Pleasure, comparable to enjoying the Company of the young Lady of his Affections. But if he is thus highly delighted with her Beauty and graceful Appearance, she is no less affected with his agreeable Personage, and genteel Behaviour; but, suitable to that Modesty which is the peculiar Characteristic of a virtuous Woman, is more reserved and cautious in the exterior Demonstration of it; for as he cannot keep his Eyes from gazing tenderly on her, so she looks on him, only by stealth, that she may not be perceived; or if ever she transgresses that Decorum, she immediately checks her Eyes from exceeding the usual and necessary bounds of Modesty and Discretion.

But now to the great Grief of our two new Lovers, the Sermon is ended, and all prepare to depart; and their Eyes with much Unwillingness and Discontent are forc'd to take their Leave of each other; when *Grand-Pre* walking a Turn or two in the Church, is doubly tormented and perplex'd, first with Grief that he is deprived of his Mistress's Sight, and then with Vexation, that he neither knows her, nor even so much as her Name; but Love, which, like Hunger and Necessity, may be called the Sharpner of our Wit, and Mother of Invention, made him think of shewing her to his Page, and sending him to enquire secretly who she was. His Page quickly returns, and informs him, that she is *Mademoiselle Mermanda*, eldest Daughter of *Monsieur de Cressonville*, one of the chief Presidents of the Court of Parliament. *Grand-Pre* is extremely rejoiced at knowing who she is, and in particular, as he finds it will be no Disgrace either to himself or his Family to marry her; and therefore laying aside all his other Designs and Resolutions, (and bidding farewell to the Wars) he resolves, if possible, to obtain her in Marriage. To which end, the next Day, with two or three Gentlemen his particular Friends, he by some Means or other gains Admittance into her Father's House; and while they entertain the Mother, her Father being not at home, he addresses the Daughter, and now his Affections highly and rationally encrease, as he finds the Excellency of her Mind perfectly answerable to the Beauty of her Person; and she too, being

now as sensible of his Understanding, as his graceful outward Appearance, esteems herself as blest in such a Lover, as he thinks himself happy in having found such a Mistress.

Grand-Pre, being thus kindly received at the first Visit, with *Mermanda's* Consent, takes a proper Opportunity to go to her Father, and discover to him his Affection for his Daughter; and his Desire to obtain her for his Wife. In this manner having begun his Suit, he leaves his Father *Grandmont* to finish it, and constantly frequents the Company of his beautiful Mistress *Mermanda*.

Her Father *Cressonville* is so far from disliking this propos'd Marriage, that he esteems it an Honour done to him; but, as he knows that *Grandmont* has also one only Daughter, as himself has a Son, he desires to make this a double Match, thereby to contract a more firm and strict Union between the two Families. This further Proposal being consulted on by the old Parents, was at last agreed to by the young Folks. And now I shall purposely omit giving any particular Account of, first the Conference, then the Letters sent by *Grand-Pre* to *Mermanda*, and by *Mermanda* to *Grand-Pre*, by *De Malleray* (*Cressonville's* Son) to *Hauteselia*, and by *Hauteselia* to *De Malleray*, that I may not swell this short History to too great, and unnecessary a Length. In short, these Marriages, to the exceeding Joy of the Parents, and the perfect Satisfaction and Content of their Sons and Daughters, were celebrated with all Variety of Feasting, Dancing, and other Entertainments, answerable to their Quality and Dignities on so joyful an Occasion.

But now we may reflect, that our Expectations and Hopes, tho' seemingly never so well founded, are often frustrated; a lively Example of which may be seen in our young Couples; for no sooner will they have reached the Height of their Wishes, and obtained their desired Happiness, but the Sun-shine of their Joy will be over-clouded and darkened by a dismal Storm of Grief, Sorrow, and Misfortune. From whence we may observe, that there is no perfect nor lasting Felicity under the Sun; but that all Things in this World are subject to a perpetual Revolution and Change.

Mermanda is of a mild and good-natur'd Disposition, but *Hauteselia* imperious and revengeful; and never did any married Couple live in more Content, or greater Happiness, than *Grand-Pre* and his Wife *Mermanda* for the Space of one whole Year; wherein she was so loving and courteous
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to him, and he so tender and kind to her, that their mutual Happiness and Virtue, engaged the universal Esteem and Praise of every Body, except only *Hauteselia*. For she, envying *Mermanda's* Prosperity and Happiness, because she could neither pretend to the one, nor equal the other, and seeing with no other Eyes than those of Ambition and Malice, endeavoured to bring some Disgrace upon her, and eclipse the Brightness of her Virtues and Glory. At the same Time, remembering that the Baron of *Betanford* (living not far from *Auxone*) who sometimes used to visit her Brother *Grand-Pre*, had highly enraged her, by buying a Jewel from her, which she had offered Money for to a Goldsmith at *Dijon* Fair, and for not returning to her a fine Lap-dog which his Page had stolen from her; she was resolved at the same Time to be revenged on him, and her Sister-in-law *Mermanda*.

Here we may observe, the weak Reasons and trifling Motives that this rash and wicked Woman has for her Malice and Revenge; but she is resolute in it, and as she has form'd a Design, is resolv'd to compleat it; to which end, she sends a Servant of her's purposely near *Auxone*, to her Brother *Grand-Pre*, with a Letter, desiring him immediately to ride over to her; for she has a Secret of great Importance to reveal to him, which she does not think proper to be trusted to Writing; at the same Time advising him to frame some other Excuse to her Husband for his sudden coming.

As soon as *Grand-Pre* had received his Sister's Letter, he took Horse, and went directly to *Dijon*, where his Brother and Sister welcome him with the greatest Marks of Joy and Kindness, but he observes her to appear much more sorrowful than usual; he is entirely ignorant of the (pretended) cause of her Discontent; but his Knowledge of it will come too soon for his Quiet, and his Curiosity will pay much too dear for it, at the Expence of his Ease. As soon as Supper is over, they all take a Walk in the Garden, to enjoy the sweet Pleasure of a serene and calm Summer's Evening; where after they had walked as long as was agreeable to their Inclinations, *Grand-Pre* took his Leave of his Brother and Sister, and was conducted to his Chamber. *Hauteselia* presently follows him, and with Tears in her Eyes informs him, that she knows for certain, the Baron of *Betanford* is too familiar with his Wife *Mermanda*; which she tells him, was a very great Uneasiness to her as soon

soon as she knew it, and now she thinks herself obliged to reveal to him, tho' with the utmost Sorrow, because she is as tender of his Honour as her own, which she esteems as much as her Life.

Grand-Pre, amazed at this strange and unexpected News, acts like one entirely depriv'd of his Senses, he stamps on the Ground, now casts himself on the Bed, then on the Floor; and had not his Sister prevented him, had killed himself with his own Sword. Such is the wretched Effect of Jealousy, which transports us beyond our Reason, sets even the most innocent Actions in a wrong Light, and takes the most slight Insinuations for the strongest Proofs. And now his vile and malicious Sister (more out of Policy than Charity) uses all her Arts and Persuasions, and at last brings him to himself; when they conclude to keep it secret from the World, but *Grand-Pre* vows to be severely revenged both on his Wife, and the Baron of *Betanford*.

Hauteselia, having thus broached her inveterate and implacable Malice, with which she was not a little pleased, went to Bed, leaving her Brother, not to Sleep, but spend the remaining part of the Night in tedious Watchfulness and tormenting Jealousy. The next Morning (much sooner than his usual Hour) he rose, took his Leave of his Brother and Sister, and so very sad and pensive rides Home.

As soon as he was come Home, his Wife *Mermanda*, perceiving him dull, is very desirous of knowing the Cause of it, and begs him to tell her what Grief or Misfortune had befallen him, for she was as willing to bear the Half of his Troubles, as of his Joys and Prosperity; and then as she was us'd to do went to kiss him, but he, not like a tender and loving Husband, turn'd away from her, which she was very much surpriz'd at, not knowing the Cause, and being never used to such unkind Treatment. After Supper (Jealousy being his chief Dish, and Grief her's) he took three or four solitary Turns in the Court, and then sent his Page for his Wife; who betwixt Comfort and Sorrow, Hope and Despair, immediately went to him. He asks her whether she is willing to walk with him; she answers him, *That his Pleasure shall be her's, and that she will most willingly and joyfully wait on him where he pleases.* Upon which, as soon as they were come to a solitary Grove, shewing his Anger by his Looks, he in a very unkind Manner, accuseth her of Adultery with the Baron of *Betanford*.

Poor *Mermanda* was so griev'd and confounded at this unexpected News, that she fell into a Swoon; and her Husband *Grand-Pre* had a great Difficulty to recover her: But as soon as she came to herself, she burst out into Tears, and endeavour'd to convince him of the Falsity of the Imputation, and the Malice of her Accusers; invoked Heaven and Earth to bear witness of her Innocence; and at the same Time, to clear the Baron of *Betanford*, she protested, that he never presumed so much, as to speak to her in a Manner unbecoming the strictest Chastity and Honour.

Grand-Pre, considering her Words, and seeing her oppress'd with Sorrow, and over-whelm'd with Tears, believes his Wife, and is (seemingly) satisfied that both she and the Baron are innocent; intreats her to forgive his Rashness, and promises never more to mention, or so much as think of it; but that his future Love and Tenderness shall make amends for his ill-grounded Jealousy.

But his Wife *Mermanda*, notwithstanding this Submission and Reconciliation of her Husband still remains disconsolate, finding it easy to give way to Grief, but very difficult to remove it; she is in an extreme Doubt what to do, or how to behave herself in this Perplexity; for she is perfectly sensible, that if the Baron of *Betanford* shou'd come to visit her Husband as usual, 'twou'd but revive and confirm his Jealousy, tho' they were both entirely innocent, and far from deserving his unjust Suspicions. Upon this, she resolves to write a Letter to the Baron of *Betanford*, and desire him to avoid coming to her House as usual, and to inform him of the Reason of it; but then she thinks it wou'd be too great a mark of Imprudence and Presumption, or that the Letter might be intercepted, or her Husband come to hear of it; however, at last, fearing the ill Consequence of his coming, and being encouraged by her own Innocence, and the Baron's Prudence, she concluded to write to him, which she did to this Effect.

S I R,

IT is not with Blushes, but Tears, that I now presume to write to you; for, you must certainly think 'tis no small Grief to me to publish my Husband's Imprudence, which by Duty I know I am bound to conceal; neither had I attempted it, but that Grief and Necessity oblig'd me; for my unspotted Chastity has not escap'd the Injury of his ill-

ill-grounded Jealousy, which makes me triumph as much in my own Constancy, as I grieve at his Rashness and Ingratitude. And not content to wrong me only, his Folly, or rather his Phrensy can't forbear reflecting on you, whom he imagines to be the Object and Cause of it; but as your Innocence can justly vindicate and defend my Honour, and your Honour my Innocence from even the least Shadow of that Crime, so, that we may both endeavour to subdue rather than inflame his irregular Passion, I humbly beg of you to avoid our House, and neither visit me, nor be intimate with him as formerly; by which means, perhaps, Time may wear away from his Thoughts, what now Truth and Reason cannot. Your unblemish'd Virtues and true Generosity assure me of this Favour, which so nearly concerns my Happiness; and your Prudence, in managing it in the best Manner, makes me entirely easy on that Account; but the only Return that is now in my poor Power to make you for so great an Obligation, besides my sincere Thanks, are my hearty Prayers, which shall constantly be employ'd on your Behalf; that your Life may be as happy as your Perfections are unfullied, and your Fame as glorious as your Merits.

MERMANDA.

As soon as the Baron had received and read this Letter, he was very much concern'd to think, there shou'd be any Cause sufficient to break off the Friendship and Intimacy between him and *Grand-Pre*, and to deprive him of the innocent Pleasure he us'd to enjoy in *Mermanda's* agreeable Company; and at the same Time that he prais'd her Discretion, and extoll'd her Innocence, he cou'd not forbear laughing (tho' concerned) at *Grand-Pre's* Folly, and inconsiderate Suspicion; but being in every respect a Gentleman, and careful to preserve a Lady's Honour, especially one so chaste and truly deserving as *Mermanda*, he was resolv'd to contribute all that lay in his Power to make her easy. Upon which, he concludes to go to *Paris* immediately, where he had a Design to go some time before, but now it was confirmed by this Accident; he therefore orders his Coach and all other Necessaries to be got ready for his Journey, and sets out for that great and fine City, always remarkable for the constant Appearance of some of the chief Nobility in the Kingdom; but before his Departure, he returns *Mermanda* this Answer.

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M A D A M,

YOUR Virtues and my Conscience make us as undeserving of your Husband's Jealousy, as he is unworthy of so chaste a Wife as Mermanda, and so true a Friend as Betanford; but as your Merit has already shined in your Constancy, so must it now in your Patientie; and this foolish Weakness of his, will at last be as faithful a Witness of your Glory, as of his Shame. Had his Folly revealed as much to me as your discreet and prudent Letter has, I wou'd have given him an Answer, not with my Pen, but with my Sword; and with the Hazard of my Life, made known to the whole World, as well as to him, the Injustice of his Accusations, and the Truth of your Virtue and Chastity, and my own Honour and Innocence. In the mean time, I shall willingly comply with your Request, and act with such Caution to your Husband, such Respect to your Virtues, and such Regard for my own Reputation, as I hope will perfectly satisfy him of your Chastity towards himself, and of mine to you. Otherwise, I so highly esteem Ladies of your excellent Perfections, and set Gentlemen of his capricious Humour at so low a Rate, that I shall know how to answer his Anger with Contempt; at least, to requite your Discretion and Prudence with the highest Admiration and Praise.

BETANFORD.

Mermanda received this Letter with an extraordinary Joy; but her's to the Baron produced Effects quite contrary to her Hopes; for Grand-Pre, hearing of the Baron of Betanford's sudden Departure for Paris, (as Jealousy is always very suspicious, even on the slightest, or rather no Grounds at all) fears a Plot between him and his Wife, and that he went away by mutual Agreement; which wild Imagination reviv'd and confirm'd his former Suspicion of her Dishonesty. His indulgent Love is therefore changed to a most inveterate Hatred, and (to shew the Height of his Passion, and Excess of his Jealousy) at last he refuses her his Bed, which is the greatest Mark of Unkindness, that can be shewn to a chaste and virtuous Wife.

Poor Mermanda, at this extravagant Effect of his Jealousy, tears her Hair, weeps, and mourns in so grievous a Manner, that nothing is capable of giving her the least Comfort or

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Satisfaction; however, (with her usual Prudence) she conceals her Grief as much as possible, only her pale Cheeks and down-cast Looks too plainly betray the inward Discontent and Uneasiness of her Mind.

Her Husband's Father and Mother, *Grandmont* and *de Carnye*, all this while know nothing of the Difference between *Grand-Pre* and *Mermanda*; but their malicious and wicked Daughter *Hauteselia* (whose Malice never sleeps) has Spies in every Corner of her Father's House to inform her of it; which answering her Wishes and Expectation, affords her a wish'd-for but cruel Pleasure.

Grand-Pre, in the mean time, inflamed with Rage, and transported by his Jealousy to so violent Extremes, vows to be revenged, first on *Betanford*, then on his Wife; to which end, he pretends Business at *Chaalons*, (Revenge and Malice being always ready at inventing Excuses) and taking one of his best Horses, a Page, and two Footmen with him, he goes a contrary Way, and comes first to *Troy*, then to *Briecount Robert* (a Days Journey from *Paris*) where being in a private Room in his Inn, he writes a Challenge, and delivers it to his Page, commanding him to ride, at Break of Day, with all possible Haste to *Paris*, and as soon as he arrived there, to go directly to the Crown of *France*, in *St. Honories-Street*, and privately deliver it to the Baron of *Betanford*; to take his Answer, and return the same Night without fail.

The Page in Compliance with his Master's Command, went with great Expedition to *Paris*, where he soon found out the Baron, and deliver'd him the Letter; who breaking it open, finds in it these Words.

GRAND-PRE to the Baron of BETANFORD.

YOU need no other Witness than yourself, to inform you in how high a Nature you have wrong'd me; and herein your false Glory has made my real Shame so apparent and glaring, that I had rather die than live and not revenge it; and now, that I mayn't deceive you, by hiding my Malice, as you have me, by your pretended Friendship, I plainly and openly tell you, that I can sooner forget all other Offences, than pardon this. For which reason, don't be surpriz'd, that I insist upon your meeting me on Thursday Morning next, at Five or Six, either with your Sword or Rapier on Horseback or on Foot,

at Carency, about two Miles from Bric-count Robert, where the Bearer hereof shall expect you, and thence conduct you to a fine Meadow, where without Seconds, I'll certainly attend you. It is impossible for me to receive any other Satisfaction; for, in short, to write you the Truth, nothing but your Life or mine can sufficiently decide this Difference.

GRAND-PRE.

At reading this Challenge, the Baron far from shewing the least Apprehension of Fear, only smil'd to think how soon the strongest Pretensions of Friendship can change into the most inveterate Hatred, even on the most trifling Suspicions, and without any real Cause. However, he kept *Grand-Pre's* Page to dine with him, and after Dinner, took him aside, and sent back this Message; *Tell your Master, that I will not fail to meet him on Horseback without a Second, at the Hour and Place appointed.* The next Morning he sent away his Footman to *Carency*, with one of his best Horses, and afterwards, about Ten of the Clock took Coach, attended only by his Surgeon and Page, and followed him thither, where he stay'd all Night.

The Morning after being *Thursday* (the Day appointed to fight) *Grand-Pre*, pretending to go to Church, sends away his Page to *Carency*, to stay for, and attend the Baron, and so only with his Surgeon, goes into the Field appointed for the Engagement. Before he had rid two or three Turns in it, in comes *Betanford*, conducted by *Grand-Pre's* Page, whom he met at *Carency*, accompany'd only by his Surgeon, having left his Coach and Attendants about a Furlong off, with command not to stir 'till they heard from him.

Having made all the usual and necessary Preparations on such an Occasion, they set Spurs to their Horses to begin the Encounter. At their first Meeting, *Grand-Pre* runs *Betanford* through the left Shoulder, and *Betanford* gives *Grand-Pre* only a slight Wound in the right Cheek, just under his Eye; but being excellent Horse-men, they turn short, and again engage, with a surprising Courage and Bravery. However, after two or three Passes more, in which both were wounded, *Grand-Pre* happen'd to pierce the Wrist of *Betanford*, which being among the Veins and Sinews, forc'd him to drop his Sword.

Grand-Pre upon this, tho' he had given way to his Rage and Malice so far as to seek the Life of one whom he once

pretended Friendship to, yet stood so nice upon the Punctilio of Honour, as not to attack, or take away the Life of a Person without a Weapon to defend himself; and observing *Betanford's* Surprise, says to him, *Baron, be under no Apprehension of Fear, for tho' a Desire of Revenge spurred me on to send you this Challenge, yet I scorn to take any Advantage of you, and wou'd not disgrace myself so much as to fight with an unarmed Man.* And immediately orders his Surgeon to deliver him his Sword again. *Betanford* surpris'd at this unexpected instance of Generosity, vows, if ever it happens in his Power to return the Obligation, not to be ungrateful.

And now they retire to take Breath, resolving to advance again with more Fury; when after four several Careers, in which *Betanford* had receiv'd seven, and given *Grand Pre* ten Wounds, they again set Spurs to their Horses, and meet with as much Vigour as if neither had lost any Blood; but at last *Betanford*, avoiding a Thrust which *Grand Pre* then made at him, and exerting himself with his utmost Force, run him thro' the Belly into the Reins, with which unfortunate Wound, his Horse at the same Time stumbling, he fell from the Saddle to the Ground speechless, and struggling as if he was on the Point of Death: But he was not then so happy as to die, being reserv'd for a more tragical End, as an Example of the sad Effects of Jealousy, and giving way to a Suspicion only rais'd by a malicious ill-natur'd Report,

Betanford seeing *Grand-Pre* fall, and imagining his Wounds were mortal, immediately alights, and out of Gratitude for the Generosity of *Grand-Pre* in restoring him his Sword, instead of putting an End to his Life, runs with open Arms to embrace and assist him; and without taking care of his own Wounds, sends his own Surgeon to order his Coach thither with all possible Haste, and gives the best Assistance in his Power to *Grand-Pre's* Surgeon in dressing and binding up his Wounds: His Coach being come, and *Grand-Pre* laid in it softly, he orders his Man to drive away to the very next Inn, where he designs to stay privately 'till both their Wounds are perfectly cur'd.

As soon as they were come to the House, *Betanford*, agreeable to the Character he had always been remarkable for, begs both the Surgeons to use their utmost Skill and Endeavour in the Recovery of *Grand-Pre*; and like a true Friend, tho' he had been ill-used, resolves not to forsake him in this Extremity.

After

After *Grand-Pre's* Wounds are opened and dressed again, and he is put to Bed, *Betanford* begins to take care of his own, which upon searching, are found not to be dangerous; he then with a handsome Present bribes the Master and Servants not to take the least Notice of this Affair, but preserve it entirely Secret; and gives a strict Charge to his own and *Grand-Pre's* Servants, to keep constantly in the House, that the News of this Accident (by their being seen) might not be spread abroad, and at last reach the Ears of their Friends.

About Noon, as *Grand-Pre's* Speech by degrees return'd to him, and he was a little easy, *Betanford* commanding all to leave the Chamber; comes to his Bed's-side, and having in a very friendly manner saluted and comforted him, earnestly desires him, as he is a Gentleman of Honour, to tell him the Reason of his sending the Challenge. *Ah! Baron* (says *Grand-Pre*) *first give me a solemn Promise of a true Answer to the Question I shall propose to you. By my Honour* (replies *Betanford*) *I'll make you no other Answer than is consistent with the strictest Truth and Friendship. Then Baron* (says he) *did you never wrong my Friendship and Honour, by being too familiar with my Wife Mermanda?* *Betanford* with the most solemn Protestations, assures him of the Innocence of *Mermanda* and himself, and perfectly clears them both from the ungenerous Aspersions and unjust Suspicions of *Grand-Pre*, and plainly shews him that the Report must be rais'd by the violent Malice of some Person, who was secretly their Enemy, and envied their Happiness. *Grand-Pre* (convinc'd of the Truth of what he said, but unwilling to accuse his Sister) humbly begs him, if he has any spark of his former Friendship left, to pardon his Jealousy and Rashness; and that as he is now perfectly satisfied of both their Innocence, and that he had no real grounds for his Suspicion, to make amends for his Error, he shou'd esteem his Friend and Wife much more dear than ever. And 'tis certainly as great a Happiness to be sensible of, and reform our Errors, as a real Misery to be guilty of them.

The Baron of *Betanford* stays thus secretly ten Days with *Grand-Pre*, when finding his Wounds cured, and his Health intirely recover'd, they resolve to depart. And thus mutually renewing their former Friendship, they take Leave of each other; the Baron taking Horse to go to *Paris*, and lending *Grand-Pre* his Coach to return to *Auxone*.

Grand

Grand-Pre immediately upon his coming home, goes to his Wife *Mermanda*, and in a very kind manner kisses her, and informs her of the Reason of his long Absence, of his Quarrel and Fight with the Baron of *Betanford*, and lastly of their mutual Reconciliation; and at the same Time, earnestly desires her once more, according to her usual good Nature, to pardon his extravagant Jealousy, as he is now perfectly satisfied of the Sincerity of his Friendship, and of her Virtue and Love.

Mermanda, as much rejoiced at his safe Return, as concerned at the unhappy Cause of his Absence, receives him without the least Disgust on that Account, and instead of appearing Angry at his unjust Suspicions, only shews the Excess of her Gladness, that he is at last sufficiently convinc'd of her Innocence. *Grand-Pre*, on the other Hand, now no longer submitting to his Passions without the Government of Reason, renews his Love and Affection to his Wife, with the greatest Ardor and Sincerity, and they now, after all their Unhappiness and Discontent, live in a perfect and mutual Felicity.

But now 'tis time to speak something of *Hauteselia*; who, when she first observ'd the Difference between her Brother *Grand-Pre* and his Wife, was exceedingly rejoiced, hoping to find her wicked Expectations answer'd; but seeing her Hopes disappointed, and that their Affection now seem'd rather encreas'd than lessen'd, she was resolved to find some other Means to be rid of *Mermanda*, whom she (wickedly) esteem'd the Enemy to her Content, and the only Obstacle in her way to Ambition and Greatness.

That she might put her Design the more effectually in Execution, she goes to one *La Fresnay* an Apothecary (remarkable only for his Villany) and agrees with him to poison *Mermanda* for two hundred Crowns; which he not only promises but performs, to the great Joy of *Hauteselia*, and the extreme Grief of *Grand-Pre*, and all else who had the Happiness of knowing her.

Hauteselia's Revenge and Ambition not being yet thoroughly satisfied with the Death of *Mermanda* only, she goes one Day to her Husband, and informs him of the unjust Suspicions that *Grand-Pre* had entertain'd against his Wife, that he imagin'd she had been guilty of Adultery with the Baron of *Betanford*, with whom, on the same Account, he had fought at *Brie-count Robert*, and that 'twas suspected, which she thought was not without Reason, that he had
poisoned

poisoned her. *De Malleray*, at the same Time griev'd and exasperated at this News, as he had always a great Value for his Sister, goes to his Father *Cressonville*, and tells him the Story, hoping by this Means to bring *Grand-Pre* to Justice. But the old Gentleman, knowing how difficult it wou'd be to prove any Thing against him, and that it wou'd at best but bring a Scandal upon his Family, and be of no Service to his deceased Daughter, is very cold in the Affair. Which so enraged *De Malleray*, that he immediately, resolving himself to revenge his Sister, sends *Grand-Pre* this Challenge.

DE MALLERAY to GRAND-PRE.

YOU must certainly think me insensible of the Wrongs my Sister, your deceased Wife, has suffered from you, did I not resolve to punish the wicked and cruel Author of them; for which Reason, confiding in the Justice of my Cause, I invite you to meet me To-morrow in the Afternoon at Five of the Clock, in the Meadow at the Foot of Talon-fort, without Seconds, either to prove the Falsity of the Accusation laid against you, or receive the just Punishment due to your Crimes.]

DE MALLERAY.

Grand-Pre, tho' not long recover'd of his late Wounds, accepts the Challenge, and goes at the appointed Time and Place to meet him. They are no sooner met, than they begin the Engagement, the one spur'd on by Passion and a Thirst of Revenge, and the other by a natural Boldness and Courage. But after several Passes, made with great Bravery and Judgment, *Grand-Pre* gives *De Malleray* a Wound in the Left Breast, which piercing his Heart, forces him to fall down to the Ground; and thus without speaking one Word he expires.

Grand-Pre seeing *De Malleray* dead, immediately hastens to Dole; but *Cressonville*, as soon as he has heard the unwelcome News of his Son's Death, gets an Order from the Parliament to apprehend *Grand-Pre*; but before it cou'd be put in execution, his Father and Friends obtain a Pardon for him, by the Favour of that generous Nobleman *Monsieur le Grand*, his Majesty's Lieutenant of the Province of *Burgundy*.

Grande

Grand-Pre by this Time discovering that his Sister *Haute-felia*, was the Cause of most of his Unhappiness, (tho' not in the least suspecting that she had poison'd his Wife) shews his Resentment in a very severe but just Manner; for he no longer uses her as his Sister, but treats her as his worst Enemy: Which so much exasperates her, that, setting no Bounds to her Malice and Revenge, she again makes Application to her wicked Apothecary *La Fresnay*, whose Covetousness and Poverty being prevail'd on by the Bribe of three hundred Crowns, he poisons *Grand-Pre*, as he had already *Mer-manda* his Wife.

And now *Haute-felia*'s Joys are complete, as she flatters herself with the vain Hopes of rising to the Height of her extravagant Wishes, being now sole Heiress to her Father's large Estate, and no Bar left to her Ambition.

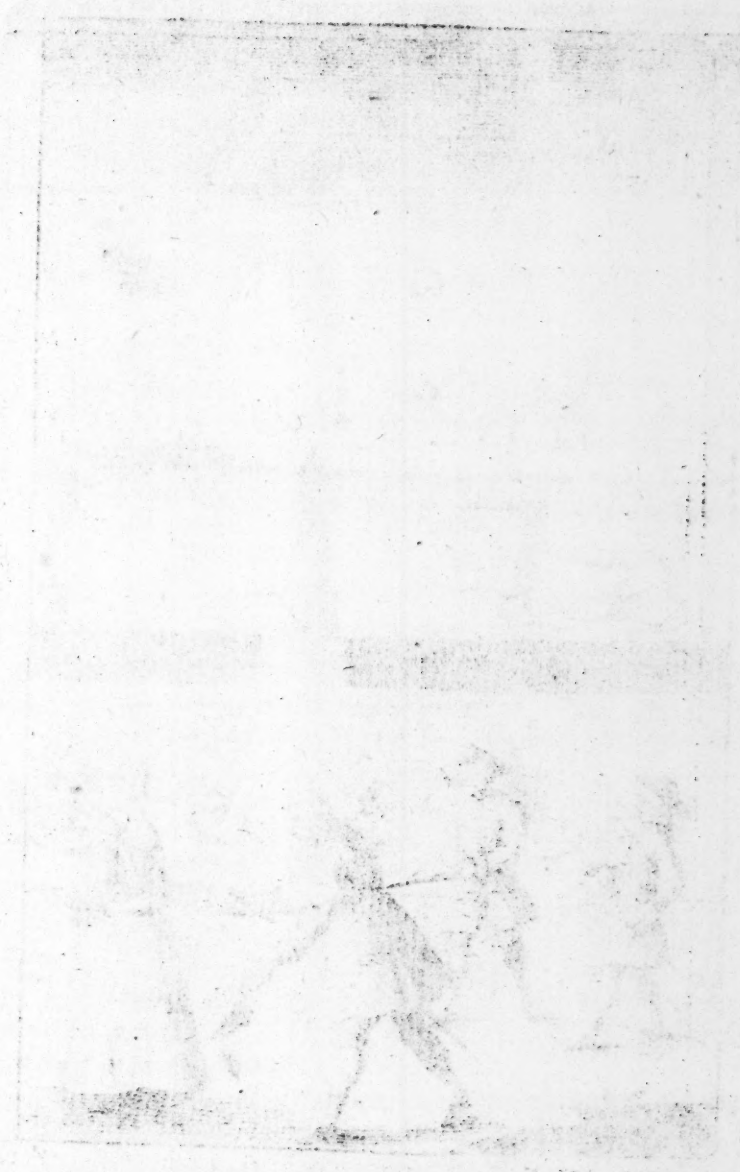
However, tho' Vice long triumphs, it always meets with its due Rewards; Justice, tho' often slow, yet always striking sure; for, about two Months after *Grand-Pre*'s Death, *La Fresnay*, for attempting to ravish a Vintner's Daughter, where he had been drinking, was condemn'd to be hang'd. But at last stung with Remorse for his past Crimes, and resolving to make his Peace with God before his Execution, he confesses that at the Instigation of *Haute-felia*, and for the Lucre of five hundred Crowns, he had poisoned *Mer-manda* and her Husband *Grand-Pre*. Upon this Confession, the Parliament alters his Sentence, and condemns him to be broken alive upon the Wheel, which was accordingly perform'd at *Dijon* to the full Satisfaction of Justice.

Some Officers are likewise dispatch'd from *Dijon* to *Grandmont*'s House to seize *Haute-felia*; who not knowing any thing of *La Fresnay*'s being apprehended, was found dancing with some Gentlemen and Ladies in her Father's Garden; from thence she is immediately carried to *Dijon*, and examin'd by a President and two Counsellors of Parliament. At first she impudently and boldly denies both Murders, and says that as *La Fresnay* is her professed Enemy, his Evidence is not to be taken against her: Upon her appearing thus Obstinate, she is order'd to be put to the Rack; and at the first Torment confesses her Guilt.

Her Judges afterwards having pronounced Sentence against her, she is according to their Determination, first hang'd, her Body then burnt, and her Ashes thrown into the Air: To remain a lasting and lively Example of the severe Punishments, that constantly attend Persons guilty of so heinous a Crime as Murder.

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The HISTORY of
Pisani and *Christeneta*.

NUMB. II.



WHILE Count *Fuentes* was Viceroy of the Dutchy of *Milan*, there lived in *Pavia*, (a City under his Jurisdiction) a Gentleman of an ancient and noble Family, named Seignor *Thomaso Viruri*, who had one only Daughter, about fifteen Years of Age, named *Dona Christeneta*, a young Lady of great Beauty, and endued with many excellent Qualifications; insomuch, that the Fame of her Father's Riches, and her own Charms, had gained her many Admirers; but a young Gentleman of *Cremona*, was the only one who made an Impression upon her Heart, and engaged her Affections. The Story was as follows:

Seignor *Emanuel Gasparino*, a Gentleman of *Cremona*, being inform'd of *Vituri's* Wealth and his Daughter *Christeneta's* Beauty, (the most powerful Persuatives to Love) resolv'd to make *Vituri* a Visit, in order to demand his Daughter to Wife; and acquainting Seignor *Ludovicus Pisani* (a Gentleman of the same City, but a *Venerian* by
 D Descent,

Descent, with whom he had contracted a very intimate Acquaintance) with his Resolution, he entreated him to bear him Company to *Pavia*, and to assist him in his Addresses to the fair *Christeneta*. *Pisani* very readily granted his Request, being highly pleased that his Friend should place so much Confidence in his Fidelity, as to trust him in an Affair of such Importance, and so they departed, having made all necessary Preparations for their Journey.

As soon as they arrived at *Pavia*, they visited Signor *Vituri*, who entertained them in a very honourable and elegant Manner, and received *Gasparino*'s Proposals with a great deal of Pleasure and seeming Satisfaction; and like a prudent and indulgent Parent, desired him first to make Application to his Daughter, and if he could gain her Affections, not to despair of his Approbation.

Having now, as he thought, nothing to fear, he began his Addresses to the charming *Christeneta* with all the Gaiety of successful Love; but she received them with all the Marks of a manifest Disdain: Yet, the more indifferent she seem'd, the more was he inflamed with the Charms of her Beauty, and the Perfections of her Mind: He beheld her with Admiration and Love; but she looked upon him with Carelessness and Contempt: He courted her with all the Variety of Mirth and Musick, after the *Italian* manner; but she still appeared with a settled Countenance, and dejected Melancholy; in short, the more he endeavour'd to make himself amiable to her by his Complaisance and Address, the more she endeavour'd to shew her Dislike by her continual Severity and Disrespect.

Gasparino's Confusion is inexpressible: He loved *Christeneta* too sincerely to have Power to forsake her; and he was too sensible of her Aversion to him to entertain any Hopes of ever being Master of her Affections: In this Extremity he apply'd himself to his Friend *Pisani*, and after he had acquainted him with the Misery of his Condition, he conjured him by all the Ties of sacred Friendship, to seek an Opportunity to sound *Christeneta*'s Inclinations, and to learn the true Cause of her obstinate Dislike.

Pisani promised to perform the Office of a Friend, and to do all that lay in his Power to procure him Satisfaction; and having found an Opportunity of Discouraging with *Christeneta* alone, he enlarged upon the Virtues of *Gasparino*, his illustrious Birth, and vast Fortune; he display'd the Comeliness of his Person, and the Greatness of his Mind;

Mind; and in short, left nothing untouch'd, which he thought might create her Esteem, and advance his Felicity. *Christeneta* all the while he was speaking, discover'd a visible Disorder in her Countenance; sometimes she look'd red as Scarlet, and then in an Instant grew pale as Death; but still kept her Eyes stedfastly fix'd on *Pisani*. He renewed his Commendations of the brave *Gasparino*, and assuring her of the Sincerity of his Love, intreated her to encourage his Constancy, and favour his Addresses. *Christeneta's* Speech failed her, her Heart beat, her Breast heav'd, and Tears and Sighs interrupted her tender Accents; but at last recovering herself a little, she expressed herself in the following Manner; *I am not ignorant, says she, of Gasparino's Merit, and that his Love deserves the most sincere Return; but it is impossible for me to alter the Decrees of Heaven, which has already fix'd my Love on an Object, whose Image is stamp'd upon my Heart never to be eraz'd.* *Pisani* perceiving her Confusion, continued to proclaim the Praises of his Friend *Gasparino*; but at the same Time, artfully endeavour'd to insinuate himself into the Favour of the beautiful *Christeneta*. He observed her to gaze on him with uncommon Earnestness, and therefore he press'd her to name the happy Man who was blest so much with her Esteem; but Modesty, that sacred Ornament of Virgin Chastity hinder'd her at that Time from revealing, what the power of Love would scarce suffer her to conceal; and with a deep Sigh, which express'd an inward Emotion of Spirit, she made him this Reply: *Let it suffice at present, generous Pisani, that I assure you, that my Love is unchangeable, and the Person on whom it is placed not altogether indifferent to you; and tho' at present I forbear to name him, yet if you will meet me secretly Tomorrow Morning in the Nun's Garden at St. Clare, by Eight of the Clock, I shall there inform you more particularly as to his Person; but in the mean Time, I intreat of you never to solicit me any more in Behalf of Gasparino, since I am determin'd not to be his Wife:* Then closing her Discourse with a Sigh, she took her Leave of *Pisani*, with an Assurance of seeing him again at the appointed Time.

Gasparino was impatient to know the Effects of this Conference, and being now truly inform'd by *Pisani* of every thing that had passed, except their intended Meeting; and being likewise assured by *Christeneta* herself, by her Father and Mother, and more especially by *Pisani*, that

her Inclinations were otherwise engaged, and that it was to no purpose to pursue his Suit, resolv'd to govern himself by Reason, and to restrain those Passions, which were likely (if submitted to) to involve him in endless Calamities; and therefore, after paying his Acknowledgments to *Vituri* and his Lady for their extraordinary Civilities, he resolv'd to leave *Pavia*, and return to *Cremona*; and now we shall leave him to prepare for his Departure, and return to *Pisani* and *Christeneta*.

Pisani, though he flatter'd himself that he was the Person with whom *Christeneta* was so much in Love, yet he was doubtful of his own Felicity, but she was too sensible of her own Weakness, and too well convinced of the Power which *Pisani*'s Presence had to influence her Soul, to endeavour either to conceal or suppress her Inclination for *Pisani*: She was, however, at a Loss how to express her Love, and preserve her Honour; her Modesty was great, but her Love was violent; and being prompted by the irresistible Power of prevailing Passion, she concluded, that it was prudent to submit to that Force which it was not in her Power to resist; and so in spite of Reason and Nature, she determin'd to assert her Love for her dear *Pisani*.

Full of this Resolution, she waited with great Impatience the Approach of the appointed Hour, when she might unbosom her tenderest Thoughts in the Arms of him whose Idea fill'd her fond Imagination with transporting Raptures.

At last the Clock proclaimed the joyful Hour, and *Christeneta* taking with her, her Prayer-Book and Waiting-Maid, as usual, went directly to the Nunnery; but instead of performing her Devotion, she prepared to meet her dear *Pisani*; and so leaving the Church, she secretly stole into the Garden, where *Pisani* was ready to receive her. It is impossible to express *Christeneta*'s Disorder at their Meeting, she blush'd, she sigh'd, she wept, and with a dejected Countenance, and melancholy Air, she conducted him to a secret Arbor; when, after a Multitude of Tears had made way for Thought, she utter'd a few Words to this Effect: *The Image that is so deeply imprinted on my Heart, bears the Features, Air, and Mien, of the generous and worthy Pisani.*—Here her Speech failed her;--- but recollecting herself a little, she beg'd of him to put an honourable Construction upon the Excess of her Love, and not to impute that to Immodesty, which was only the Effect of an uncommon Affection.

Pisani

Pisani was very much amaz'd at the Frankness of this Declaration; and no less at a Loss how to behave himself in an Affair that was likely to be attended with so many perplexing Circumstances: *Christeneta's* Charms were too powerful to be beheld without Admiration, and the Nobility of her Descent too illustrious not to command Respect; but the Honour that was due to a Friend would not suffer him to give way to his Inclination; though at the same Time he cherish'd a secret Pleasure, that *Christeneta* should prefer him to *Gasparino*. Seeing her, however, impatient to know how he stood affected, he made the following Reply: *Though, Madam, I cannot but acknowledge myself highly honour'd by the Choice you have been pleas'd to make, yet there is something so sacred in Friendship, that even the most abandon'd Villains have made a Scruple to violate; and as you are sensible that I have been so far engaged in the Service of my Friend, as even to solicit you in his Behalf, I am confident that you yourself would soon conceive an Aversion against the Man who could be so base as to betray the Confidence reposed in him, especially in an Affair of such a near Concern; and therefore I am sure that you'll forgive a Denial, extorted by Necessity, and not by Choice; for was it in my Power to indulge your Love with Honour, and reward your Affection with the most convincing Marks of a sincere Return, without doing Violence to my Reputation, believe me, Madam, I would die to do it.* And so expressing all the Tenderness that Duty required, and Honour would permit, he took his Leave of *Christeneta*, and return'd with *Gasparino* to *Cremona*.

Gasparino, after his Return, endeavour'd all he could to forget *Christeneta*; but to no purpose: He cherish'd the Idea of her Beauty and Perfections with a Lover's Fondness, and wish'd himself again at *Pavia*, to have the Pleasure of seeing and admiring her, though he was sure to be daily tormented with fresh Marks of her Disdain. On the contrary, *Christeneta* was as much afflicted with the Absence of *Pisani*; she wish'd herself a thousand times at *Cremona*, or him at *Pavia*; but being unable to obtain her Desire, she resolv'd to write to him, and in less than ten Days Time she sent a confident Messenger to *Cremona* with the following Letter:

CHRISTENETA.

CHRISTENETA to PISANI.

THINK it not strange that I continue to solicit your Love, Dear Pisani, since my Soul can enjoy no Felicity without it; and though I blush to write in so passionate a manner to your Sex, yet when I consider that it is to Pisani, I forget that Distinction, and look upon you only as the most precious Ingredient of my own Composition; for as Woman in the Beginning received Her Being from the first Man, whom she no sooner saw, but, charm'd with Admiration, and with Love, she ran to carress, moved thereto by an irresistible Sympathy; so I, inspir'd with equal Zeal, and mov'd by no less powerful Sympathy, felt the same tender Sentiments of innocent Love when I first beheld Pisani. And as they took their Rise from no unchaste Desires, or sordid Views, I flatter myself that my Zeal for you will be received with Honour, since my Fortune is not, inferiour, nor my Family less Honourable than yours; and as my Youth is not decay'd, nor my Innocence blemish'd, nor the Purity of my Affection stained with Wantonness, I hope you will look upon me with Tenderness, and bless me once more with your Presence in Pavia. Consider, Dear Pisani, what your Absence is to me when your Company is my supreme Felicity. Oh! how happy should I be was I in Pavia, or you in Cremona. But alas! how miserable, if we must remain for ever separate! This, then, is my last and only Wish, That Heaven may kindle in your Breast a Passion sincere and kind like mine; that we may be united in the sacred Bands of holy Society; and that we may possess the Sweets of mutual Happiness in the calm Enjoyment of Innocence and Love.

CHRISTENETA.

After Pisani had received, and perused this Letter, he was seiz'd with an unusual Sympathy; his Heart melted, his Courage failed, and his whole Frame soften'd into Tenderness and Compassion; he could no longer resist the Charms of pleading Innocence, and continue steadfast to Gasparino; but yielded to the soft Allurements of his own Imagination, and indulg'd the dear Idea of the divine Christeneta. He was, indeed, unwilling to wrong his Friend, but more unwilling to appear ungrateful to his Mistress;

Mistress; and therefore, lest she should accuse him of Disrespect, he return'd the following Answer:

PISANI to CHRISTENETA.

I Perceive, dear Christeneta, that your Affection for me is sincere; but, how, alas! can I reward it without violating my Fidelity to my Friend? Was it not for that Consideration alone, which would prove an everlasting Blemish to my Honour, I would not scruple to say, that I lov'd Christeneta more than all her Sex, because she best deserves it; but, at the same Time, give me Leave to assure you, that as you are too fair to be refused, I am too honest to betray my Friend, especially one who is confident of my Fidelity, and I assured of his. If Time should reconcile these Difficulties with my Reputation, my Heart's for ever yours, and I could with Pleasure assure you that I live more in Pavia than I can in Cremona, since I live in you, and you in that. I have never hitherto been accused of Cruelty, neither can I live and prove unkind to you; live therefore in that assurance, and I will die rather than forfeit my Engagement.

PISANI.

When *Christeneta* had read this Letter she perceived a glimmering Brightness shining, as it were, through the gloomy Darkness which had overhadow'd her wild Imagination; but Hope had no sooner produced a calm Serenity in her Breast, but Fear darken'd and obscured the Lustre. Her Love was unchangeable, and therefore could admit of no Denial; she esteem'd *Pisani* the Centre of her Happiness, and had her Eyes as constantly fix'd on him as the Needle of the Compass points to the Pole; and being restless 'till she had obtained her Desire, she wrote a Letter demanding a positive Answer, either to make her happy or miserable.

CHRISTENETA to PISANI.

I May pass the Bounds of Discretion, but will not exceed those of Honour. I have learn'd by woeful Experience this Maxim, That Love that owes its Beginning to the Principles of Honour, can never be separated from our Being. If therefore, I live, I must love; and if I love, my Love, must subsist by the Influence of that Object from whence

whence it took its Rise. I beseech you, dear Pisani, to consider this, and to weigh the Difference with Reason and Humanity, between preserving a Being whose Existence depends on your Indulgence, and violating a Friendship which is of no Certainty, and can at best but terminate in civil Respect. Can even your Enemies accuse you of Injustice to Gasparino, for doing Justice to me? especially when I solemnly declare, as I now do, that it is an Impossibility for me to love him? and I do likewise protest, that the more cold you seem on his Account, the more I shall despise him upon yours: This, I think, is sufficient to justify your Kindness to me before the most severe Judge; and therefore, as your last Letter was full of Doubts and Ambiguities, let your Answer to this be plain and full; either convince me that you love me with Sincerity, and make me happy; or tell me at once that you hate me, and put an End to my miserable Life.

CHRISTENETA.

This Letter was the more agreeable to Pisani, because it freed him, as he thought, from any further Obligations to Gasparino; and consequently remov'd the only Obstacle that hinder'd him from openly professing his Love to the charming Christeneta. And being thus separated from the Interest of his Friend, he was at Liberty to express his Sentiments to the Sovereign of his Heart; and to convince her that she was as dear to him as Life itself, he return'd her the following Answer.

PISANI to CHRISTENETA.

THE Charms of Beauty, and the Smiles of Fortune, are all that's necessary to engage the undiscerning Part of Mankind to adore the fair Possessor: But when an Object possess of these, and blest with Wisdom and Discretion, good Nature and good Breeding, and every amiable Quality, (conscious of her own superior Merit) shall dare to trample on a servile Custom, and assert her Passion for the Man she loves; the most Discerning must then be transported with Delight at the agreeable Surprise. When I reflect upon the falling Tears, the artless Sighs, and broken Accents which pierced my melting Heart when you revealed your Passion, and implor'd my Love, I am rapt in Admiration that my Soul should be so long insensible

sensible of the Blessings you put in my Power to possess. But, divine *Christeneta*, if my future Zeal and Affection can atone for my past Indifference, no earthly Obligation shall force me to suppress my Inclinations, or restrain me from the Enjoyment of your Company, which is of all Things the most essential to my present Happiness. My Presence at Pavia shall soon convince you of the Truth of what I now write. In the mean Time, rest assured, that as your Affection for me is founded upon Virtue, my Love for you shall continue with Honour.

PISANI.

This Letter was so agreeable to *Christeneta* that she no longer condemn'd her own Presumption in writing to *Pisani*; but, on the contrary, applauded her Resolution, and blessed the Day that she first attempted it; nay, such was the Excess of her Joy, when she was assured of his coming to Pavia, that she blamed the Hours and Days for not passing quicker to hasten her dear *Pisani* to her Arms.

Now if *Christeneta* was impatient to behold *Pisani*, no less impatient was he for the Enjoyment of *Christeneta*; for calling to Mind her blooming Youth, her sprightly Wit, and lovely Features, he grew weary of those Pleasures which before he delighted in, and thought of nothing more than how to make himself agreeable to the Object he admired; nay, so deeply was he enamour'd, that his only Happiness was in the Contemplation of her Beauty and Virtues. And now in Pursuance of his Promise, without taking any Notice to his Friend *Gasparino*, he prepares himself for his Journey to Pavia, to possess the amiable Endearments of the divine *Christeneta*.

As soon as he arrived at Pavia, accompanied with a few of his Friends, he visited *Christeneta*, who received him with all the Demonstrations of a sincere Affection; inso-much, that the greatest Part of their Time was taken up in mutual Assurances of everlasting Love, and in consulting how to consummate their Joys, and complete their Happiness.

But that nothing might disturb the calm Enjoyment of their Felicity after their Marriage, *Pisani* thought it requisite to obtain the Consent of *Christeneta's* Parents. And to that End, he made a Visit to *Vituri*, and honourably, but secretly proposed the Match. *Vituri* at first received him with all imaginable Respect; but when he understood his Business, he treated him with a great deal of Indifference;

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insomuch,

insomuch, that he perceived it would be no easy Matter to gain old *Vituri* to favour their Wishes; for being of a covetous Disposition, he preferred Riches to Honour; and being sensible that *Pisani's* Estate was very much encumber'd, and himself of a very extravagant Temper, he was sure he could marry his Daughter to greater Advantage when he pleased; and therefore he gave him to understand, that he had as yet no Intent to marry *Christeneta*, by reason, he said, she was too young to take upon her the Care of a Family; whereby *Pisani* might plainly perceive he had no Mind to bestow his Daughter upon him.

This Denial did very much afflict *Pisani* and *Christeneta*: They saw their Hopes frustrated, when they least expected such a Disappointment, and no way left to reap the happy Effects of their Constancy and Love: In this Extremity, *Pisani* apply'd himself to his own Parents and Friends, in order to engage them to solicit *Vituri* in his Behalf; but to no purpose: *Vituri's* Age was not to be prevailed upon in an Affair, wherein his Judgment, and not his Passion had directed him to act as he had done: This therefore, instead of procuring them any Satisfaction, produced new Difficulties; for *Christeneta* was forbid *Pisani's* Company, and he her Father's House.

There was now no other Remedy but Patience to put an End to their Uneasiness; for having try'd every Method that was likely to succeed with *Vituri*, and all proving ineffectual; and despairing of bringing Things to a happy Issue, he return'd to *Cremona* to wait a more favourable Opportunity to pursue his Suit. In the mean Time, to make their Separation as easy as possible, they entertained one another with the most affectionate Letters, wherein they express'd their Constancy to each other 'till Death or Marriage should put an End to their Misery.

Being thus convinced of each other's Sincerity, *Pisani* wrote to *Christeneta* to apply herself to her Mother, and to engage her, if possible, to countenance their Design; and then, perhaps, she might more easily procure *Vituri's* Consent to their Marriage. *Christeneta* immediately put this Advice in Execution, and acquainting her Mother with the whole Affair, that it was through her Solicitation that *Pisani* was at first prevail'd upon to make his Addressee; and that it was impossible for her to enjoy any Pleasure upon Earth while he was not present to partake of it; her Mother mov'd with Compassion, promised to use her utmost Endeavour

deavour to gain her Husband to approve of the Match, which she soon accomplish'd; and our Lovers were again permitted to Visit one another with the usual Freedom.

This being done, and all Impediments removed, the Parents on both Sides reconciled, and every Thing in a fair Way to conclude the Marriage, the Day was set; and all the Nobility of *Pavia* and *Cremona* were invited to the Wedding; and that the Nuptials might be solemniz'd with the greater Splendor, they provided rich and sumptuous Apparel, and order'd a vast Variety of Provisions of all sorts to be laid in, Musick prepared, and every thing in Readiness against the appointed Time; but the Almighty Power that over-rules all our Actions, had decreed that this Marriage should never be consummated.

For *Gasparino*, being inform'd of all these Preparations, enquired narrowly, who *Christeneta* was to be married to; and finding that his Friend *Pisani* was the Person, was so insens'd against him for his Treachery, that he vow'd his Destruction, even at the Expence of his own Life; for he was resolv'd to die rather than suffer himself thus to be abused by one whom God and Nature had made his Inferior. And being full of Revenge, and transported beyond the Bounds of Reason with desperate and bloody Resolutions, sometimes he was resolv'd to shoot *Pisani* either in the Street or in his Bed, at other times to hire Ruffians to murder him wherever they should meet him; but coming to reflect seriously with himself on the Wickedness of such a Resolution, he bless'd the divine Author and Disposer of all Beings, who had prevented his perpetrating a Crime which must certainly have made him odious to Man, and detestable to God; and so calling Reason to his Assistance, endeavour'd to forget *Christeneta*, and to bury his Malice to *Pisani* in eternal Oblivion.

Happy had it been for *Gasparino*, had he continued stedfast in this truly Christian Resolution! He had not then expos'd himself to so many Dangers and Misfortunes, nor given himself a Prey to feed the Malice of his implacable Enemies. But finding that all *Pavia*, as well as *Cremona*, talk'd loudly of the Indignity done him by *Pisani*, and concluding that his Honour would suffer a manifest Injury, if he put up so great an Affront without due Correction, he was impatient to find out *Pisani* and demand Satisfaction; and being assured that he was at *Pavia*, and just upon the Brink of Marriage, he took Horse directly, attended only

by one Gentleman, and a Servant, and posted with all Expedition to prevent the Consummation, and to redeem his Honour in that very City, where he had suffered the Disgrace.

Being arrived at *Pavia*, and assur'd that *Pisani* was at that very Instant in Company with *Christeneta*, he was so enraged that he had much ado to forbear sending him a Challenge that very Moment, that his Mistress might be an Eye Witness to the Delivery thereof; but, to speak Truth, Passion could not have found a better Opportunity, nor Judgment a worse, to put his desperate Purpose in Execution; and therefore, by the Advice of *Sebastiano* (the Gentleman who accompanied him from *Cremona*) he deferr'd his Rage 'till a more seasonable Opportunity, lest *Christeneta*, having Notice of his Design, should find out Ways to prevent the Combat. For that Reason he kept secretly in the Inn all that Day, and next Morning he gave *Sebastiano* the Challenge with Orders to deliver it to *Pisani*, as secretly and fairly as possible.

Sebastiano repaired immediately to *Pisani's* Lodgings, and finding him in his Chamber, very courteously saluted him, and presented the Challenge. *Pisani* received it with a becoming Gracefulness, and breaking open the Seal, read the following Words:

G A S P A R I N O to P I S A N I.

YO U have given the first Breach to our Friendship; and since you have treacherously robb'd me of my Mistress, you must now either take my Life, or lose your own. If you consider your own Ingratitude, you cannot, in Honour, condemn this my Resolution: The Place, the West-End of the Park; the Hour, Four or Five after Dinner; the Manner, on Foot with Seconds; the Weapons, two single Rapiers. If your Courage answer your Infidelity, you will not refuse to meet me.

G A S P A R I N O.

Pisani, after he had perused this Challenge, very cheerfully, and without any Emotion, or shew of Alteration, either in his Speech or Countenance, spoke to *Sebastiano* in this manner; Pray, Sir, tell Gasparino that myself and Second shall be ready to meet him at the appointed Time and Place,

Pisani

Pisani having thus accepted the Challenge, carry'd it so secretly, that *Christeneta* had not the least Notice of it; but acquainting *Sfondrato*, a valiant young Gentleman, descended from a noble Family in *Milan*, who attended him from *Cremona*, with the whole Affair, and shewing him the Challenge, entreated him to do him the Honour to second him in the Quarrel. *Sfondrato* very chearfully granted his Request, and so the Seconds like honourable Enemies, met and prepared all Things in Readiness for the Duel. The Hour approaching they all took Horse, and rode directly to the Park (so famous for the Defeat of the *French*, by the Emperor's Forces, in a Battle wherein their King *Francis* the Second, was taken Prisoner.)

Gasparino and *Sebastiano* were first in the Field, but *Pisani* and *Sfondrato* were not long after; so having ty'd up their Horses, they all prepared for the Engagement, and with an undaunted Courage appeared rather to despise Death, than to be in the least terrified at its Approaches.

Gasparino and *Pisani* drew, and at the first Encounter *Pisani* was hurt in the left Arm and *Gasparino* in the Right Flank; they again separate themselves, and try their Fortunes afresh. In this second Onset, *Pisani* received two Wounds, one slanting on his Ribs, and the other in his Right Arm; and *Gasparino* one deep one in his left Shoulder; but they look'd upon these only as Scars, unworthy to be taken Notice of by Men of Courage; and therefore seeing their Shirts but sprinkled, they renew'd there Courage, and engaged with Vigour. This third Bout proved favourable to them both; for *Gasparino* dexterously warding *Pisani*'s Thrusts, and gave him a slight Wound in the Leg, and so they closed, which *Pisani* did on purpose to gain the Advantage of the Ground.

The Seconds all this while, kept close to their Stations, being incapable of judging to whose Side the Victory would incline, by reason of their Equality, both in Courage and Wounds; and both of them being resolved to die or to conquer, they renew the Combat with fresh Courage; but *Gasparino* perceiving, that *Pisani*, (grown desperate with the Thoughts of losing *Christeneta*,) fought with greater Violence than before, resolved to behave with Caution and Judgment; and to endeavour to defend himself without making a Push but upon manifest Advantage. The Event answer'd his Expectation; for *Pisani* having

having wearied himself to no purpose, began to fail in his Play, and so gave *Gasparino* an Opportunity to run him through the Body in the second Encounter, without receiving any further Harm than a slight Wound in the Neck. This was the fatal End of the brave but unfortunate *Pisani*, who fell a Sacrifice to the lawless Fury of an incensed Friend. *Sfondrato* and his Surgeon, ran presently to his Assistance; but neither the Affection of the one, nor the Art of the other, was able to recal his fleeing Spirits, his Soul being already wasted to the Regions of the Dead.

Whilst *Sfondrato* and the Surgeon were thus busy in searching and surveying the Body of their deceased Friend, *Sebastiano* addressed himself to *Gasparino*, and congratulating him on his Victory over his Adversary, highly commended his Courage and Bravery, and extoll'd the Glory of the Action. But *Gasparino* told him, That those Praises belong'd not to him, but to a Superior Providence, who had decreed *Pisani's* Death, and only made him the unhappy Instrument to punish his Ingratitude, *Therefore, my Friend*, said he, *rely not too much upon your own Valour, but commit yourself to the Care of the Almighty Disposer of all Things, who is able to overthrow the Strong and Mighty, and to give Victory to the Weak and Feeble, suffer not yourself to be transported with too much Violence or Presumption, but behave yourself with Courage and Equanimity; and as for my own Part, as my Wounds are not Mortal, I am resolved to wait the Issue of the Combat between you and Sfondrato, before I'll have them dress'd, being as anxious for the Safety of my Friend, as for the Preservation of my own Life.*

Sfondrato being not in the least daunted at the Misfortune and Death of his Friend, but rather animated to revenge it upon *Sebastiano*, who brought the Challenge, advanced with his Sword drawn to the Place of Action; *Sebastiano* met him with a chearful Countenance; and both Engaging with equal Courage, they maintain'd the Combat with unspeakable Bravery; but God, who is highly offended with these cruel and unmerciful Actions, which though Honour seem to excuse, yet Religion cannot, would not suffer the Victory to end in the Destruction of one; but, as an Example of his severe Justice, decreed that both sides should share the Marks of his divine Vengeance; so that after three several Encounters, where-
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in both were forely wounded, the Death of *Sebastiano* put an End to the Dispute, being run through the Belly by the Victorious *Sfondrato*.

Thus our four Combatants being now reduced to the Number of two, *Sfondrato* expected that *Gasparino* would have challeng'd him to revenge the Death of his deceased Friend, which he had certainly perform'd, had not the Loss of so much Blood render'd him too feeble for such an Attempt; and therefore without saying a Word one to the other, they committed themselves to the Care of their Surgeons; and after giving some necessary Directions concerning the Bodies of their deceased Friends, they made their Escape, *Sfondrato* to *Florence*, and *Gasparino* to *Parma*; from whence they determin'd not to return till their Friends had procured, and sent them their Pardons.

By this Time, the News of the Death of *Pisani* and *Sebastiano* was spread all over *Pavia* and *Cremona*, to the unspeakable Grief of the Parents and Relations of those two unfortunate young Gentlemen, whose untimely End was universally lamented by all who had the Happiness of their Acquaintance, by reason of their uncommon Virtues, and excellent Conversation.

But neither the Grief of Parents, nor the Sorrow of Friends were able to equal the Tears and Lamentations of *Christeneta*, for the Death of her dear *Pisani*. Her Affliction was past Description; she tore her Hair, disfigur'd her Face, put off her rich and glittering Garments and cloath'd herself in Sackcloth; she wept, and abandon'd all Company, so that all the Persuasions in the World were not capable to give her the least Shaddow of Consolation; nay, so far was she from receiving any Comfort, that she gave herself up to all the wild Extravagances of Passion, and all her Intervals of Thought were employ'd in meditating Revenge against *Gasparino* for bereaving her of the only Man on Earth, she either had, or could love; and therefore she resolv'd not to let his Death pass unpunish'd. Whereby we may evidently discover, that there is no Affection nor Malice so extravagant as that of a Woman; for when they love, they love exceedingly; but when they hate, their Malice is implacable.

But to return to *Gasparino*: In a short Time, having obtain'd his Pardon by the Mediation of his Friends, he return'd from *Parma* to *Cremona*, where he was joyfully received by his Parents, with whom he staid a considerable
Time

Time under a sort of Restriction, giving himself up to Penitence and Meditation, and avoiding all publick Recreations; delighting more in solitary Amusements, than in all the Pomp and Splendor of the most exalted Stations. In this happy manner did *Gasparino* live 'till the Remembrance of *Christeneta's* Charms kindled in his Breast new Desires, and inspir'd him with a longing Inclination to renew his Pretensions; and having now no Rival in the Way to hinder his Progress, and falsely imagining that Time had destroy'd *Christeneta's* Affection for the Memory of *Pisani*, he was encouraged by these Suggestions to begin his Addresses. And to that Intent, he sent some of his nearest Relations to make known his Resolution to *Vituri*, with whom he sent Letters to *Christeneta*, and then visited her himself. *Christeneta* received him with a seeming Respect; and the better to execute her Revenge, dissembled her Affection for the Memory of *Pisani*, and counterfeited a real Esteem for *Gasparino*, thereby to get him the surer into her Power.

Gasparino, blinded with Love, and not considering how dangerous it is to rely on the Favour of an incensed Woman, (as our Senses are always most clouded the nearer we approach our Ruin) us'd all the Arguments he was Master of, to persuade *Christeneta* to honour him with her private Conversation, that by that Indulgence he might be enabled to speak his Sentiments, and declare the Sincerity of his Affection. This *Christeneta* consented to with a seeming Reluctance; though in Reality it was all she wanted to complete her Revenge; and feigning herself vanquish'd with his Importunities, and to shew herself more than ordinary obliging, she appointed to meet him in the Nun's Garden at Six next Morning. *Alas! how impossible is it to avoid the Danger, when the Deceitful carry Honey on their Tongue, and Poison in their Hearts!*

Gasparino, pleas'd with his Success, and the Favour of *Christeneta*, return'd to his Lodgings full of Joy; but she, pleas'd as much with the Opportunity that now offer'd, apply'd herself to conspire his Destruction; and in order to put her cruel Design in Execution, she secretly engag'd with two Russians, *Bianco* and *Brindoli*, to fall upon him and murder him, the very Instant he enter'd the Garden.

As soon as Day-light appeared, *Gasparino* left his Bed, being impatient to possess the promised Enjoyment of his beloved *Christeneta's* Company; but before he had dress'd himself,

himself, he perceived the Sky to darken, the Clouds thicken, and an unusual Gloom hang over the Surface of the whole Earth; he was seiz'd with sudden Horror, his Limbs shook, his Visage grew pale, and dreadful Apprehensions seem'd to warn him of some impending Danger. But these Omens were not sufficient to deter him from the Completion of his approaching Destiny.

By this Time *Christeneta*, *Bianco*, and *Brindoli*, had station'd themselves in the Garden; she walking on the open Terras, and they hiding themselves privately in an Arbour, ready to receive *Gasparino* with an unexpected Welcome. The Clock struck Six, and *Gasparino* enter'd the Garden Door, and seeing *Christeneta*, ran with all the Tenderness of eager Love to carress and embrace her; he saluted her with the softest Language of endearing Love, but she heard him with an unexpected Indifference; and turning to him, *Gasparino*, says she, *this is the Place where I had my first Conference with Pisani, and where I intend to have my last with you.* At these Words, the Ruffians fell upon him, but having had time to draw his Sword, he defended himself manfully for some time, but being at last over-power'd, with strength, and unable to defend himself any longer, he fell a Victim to the Revenge of the cruel *Christeneta*; as soon as she perceived his Fall, lest his Groans should allarm the Convent, she ran speedily, and with her own Hands thrust her Handkerchief into his Mouth, and pulling out a Dagger, to shew the Fierceness of her insatiate Revenge, stabb'd him to the Heart, and stamping upon his dead Carcase with her Feet, *This*, says she, *I sacrifice to the Memory of my dear Pisani.* Then *Bianco* and *Brindoli*, taking the murder'd Body, and tying a great Stone to it, threw it into the Well; and that they might not be discover'd, made their Escape through a Postern Door. *Christeneta*, to cover her Crime with the outward Shew of Piety and Devotion, went to the Nuns Church, and prostrating herself before the Altar, offer'd up her Prayers, not as an Atonement for the Crime she had committed, but rather that it was perform'd without the Knowledge of any Earthly Being.

Thus having finish'd her Revenge, she return'd Home full of Joy that every thing should succeed so agreeably to her Wishes. But God would not suffer her Cruelty to go unpunish'd; but brought the Murder to Light by a miraculous Providence.

Some of the Nuns of *St. Clare* being in their Cells at their Morning Orizons, hearing the Clashing of Swords, inform'd their Abbess who allarm'd the Nunnery. Most of them ran into the Garden, and seeing the Foster Gate open, and the Avenues sprinkled with Blood, they suspected Murder to have been committed; and so acquainting the Magistrates of the City with it, they gave Orders that all the Ditches, Hedges, Thickets, and other secret Places, in and about the Garden, should be thoroughly searched, which was accordingly done without making any Discovery. Then applying themselves to the Surgeons of the City, they enquir'd whether any Strangers or others having fresh Wounds, had Recourse to them for a Cure; whereupon one *Rhanutio*, a famous Surgeon, inform'd them, that two Soldiers, *Bianco* and *Brindoli*, had been dress'd by him of nine Several Wounds about eight in the Morning. Orders were immediately issued out for the apprehending and taking of them, and being brought before the Magistrates and examin'd, they said, they had quarrell'd between themselves, and so fought it out; and being ask'd where, they said, in the Nuns Garden at *St. Clare*, about Six in the Morning; which agreeing exactly with the Nuns Relation, put an End to any further Enquiry for that Time.

But it being currently reported that *Gasparino* had been absent from his Lodgings, that his Servant could hear nothing of him, and that he had not been at *Vituri's* House, where he usually used to visit for two Days; the Magistrates examin'd the Servant when he last saw his Master, and where. The Servant reply'd, *That his Master went from his Chamber between Five and Six in the Morning on the Day the Disturbance happen'd at St. Clare; that he had his Prayer-Book in his Hand when he went out, as if he had been going to Church, but order'd him not to follow him; and that he had heard nothing of him since.* The Magistrates comparing the Circumstances of this Relation with those of *Bianco* and *Brindoli's* fighting, and the Prayer-Book and the Nuns Church carrying with it some Coherance, and shew of Probability, resolved to search more narrowly into the Affair.

Whereupon, they (guided, as it were by the immediate Direction of God,) order'd *Bianco* and *Brandoli* to be again apprehended, and forthwith carried to Prison, lest if they were guilty, they should make their Escape, which they

they had certainly done, had not they been thus timely prevented.

Being again brought before the Magistrates and examin'd concerning *Gasparino*, they declare, that they neither knew, nor ever heard of the Gentleman; and therefore could not be justly accused for the Murder of one whom they never saw: The Magistrates, however, ordered them to the Rack, thinking thereby to extort a Confession, but to no purpose.

Christeneta, in the mean Time, hearing that *Bianco* and *Brindoli* were Sentence to the Rack, was in the greatest Consternation imaginable, and resolv'd to make off; but being again inform'd that they had endured the Torture, and that they had confess'd nothing, she was overjoy'd, and laid aside all Thoughts of departing from her Father's House.

When the Magistrates were searching the Garden a second Time, one of them spied the Well, and ordering Instruments to be brought immediately to search it, they found the Body of *Gasparino*, which with some Difficulty they brought up, mangled in a barbarous Manner, and pierced with no less than thirteen several Wounds. This mournful Spectacle moved the Compassion of the Spectators, but especially *Gasparino's* Servant, who could not refrain from Tears at the barbarous Cruelty exercis'd against his Master.

While they were thus surveying the Body, a Boy standing by, observed something in the Mouth of the Deceased, and pointing to it, some of the Standers-by pull'd out a Handkerchief, whereon was mark'd in red Letters these Words, CHRISTENETA VITURI. This was certainly a most miraculous Discovery, wherein the Almighty God display'd his Omnipotence, in bringing Murders to condign Punishment, for an Example to others to guard against the powerful Instigation of the Devil.

This Circumstance gave Occasion for much Deliberation. The Magistrates were cautious how they accused a Lady of an unspotted Character with the Murder of a Gentleman, who had been known to court her for a considerable Time with the Approbation of her Parents; and therefore they order'd the Villians, *Bianco* and *Brindoli*, to be brought before them a third Time, and charged publickly with the Murder of *Gasparino*, whose Body they had thrown into the Well of the Nun's Garden; and by making large
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Promises of Favour, if they would reveal their Accomplices, they endeavour to bring them to a Confession, but all to no purpose; for they still deny'd that they knew any thing of the Gentleman, much less of the Murderer. They were condemn'd to double Tortures; but in Vain, for they continued obstinate to the last Extremity.

The Magistrates, nevertheless, being inform'd that *Christeneta* had been seen at Prayers about the Time the Murder was supposed to be committed, a thing not usual with her so early in the Morning; and that she had been heard to vow Revenge upon *Gasparino* for killing *Pisani*; and weighing these and other concurring Circumstances together, thought it was their Duty not to let her pass without Examination; and so issuing out Warrants for apprehending her, they caused her to be taken up and examined. They found a strange Confusion and Incoherence in her Answers, but no direct Confession; and therefore, notwithstanding her Quality, they exercised the usual Method to force a Confession by Torture. She patiently permitted herself to be fasten'd to the Rack, but being unable to endure the Torments, freely confess'd the whole Truth; that in Revenge of *Pisani's* Death, she had caused *Bianco* and *Brindoli*, to murder him in the Manner before related.

And thus was this barbarous and inhuman Murder miraculously discover'd by the Hand of Providence, and the Murderers brought to Justice by a wonderful Direction. The Sentence pronounced against *Bianco* and *Brindoli*, was, to have their Right Hands cut off, then to be hang'd, and their Bodies thrown into the River *Po*: And *Christeneta*, notwithstanding all the Methods taken by her Father and her Relations to obtain her Pardon, was condemn'd to be hang'd, then burnt, and her Ashes to be thrown into the Air; which severe Sentence was accordingly executed before an infinite Number of Spectators, who though they could not help condemning her Cruelty, and acknowledging the Justice of her Sentence, yet admired her Constancy and Affection to *Pisani*.

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The HISTORY of
Mortaigne and Fasselina.

N U M B. III.



WITHIN a Day's Journey of the famous City of *Lyons* in *France*, at the Foot of Mount *Terara*, upon the Banks of the delightful River *Lignon*, whose Murmurs are so sweetly celebrated by that noble Patron and darling of the Muses, the Marquis of *Urse*; in his beautiful and divine *Astræa*, there dwelt a poor Country Farmer, named *Andrew Mollard*, whose Wife dying, left him one only Daughter, about twelve Years of Age, whom I shall call *Fasselina*. Whilst the good old Man remained inconsolable for the Loss of his Wife, he was at the same Time anxious for the Welfare of his Daughter; all his Care was in the Education of his dear *Fasselina*; and she on her Part, though so young, took Pleasure in nothing more than in softening her Father's Cares by a dutiful Obedience, and soothing the Peevishness of his Age by her innocent and fond Endearments. Thus happy in a Daughter, the old Man forgot by degrees the Loss of his Wife; for as *Fasselina* grew in Years, she increased in Duty and Affection,

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fection, and made it her constant Practice to perform all the kind Offices imaginable to make her Father's Happiness as complete as the Infirmities of his Age would allow.

In this agreeable Manner did *Jassolina* and her Father live together, 'till she arrived at her fifteenth Year, when by Reason of her extraordinary Beauty, and the Excellency of her Qualifications, she became the Delight and Admiration of all who knew her; insomuch, that her Father began to entertain Thoughts of marrying her to some agreeable Youth in the Neighbourhood, whose Birth, Fortune, and Character was suitable to her own, being resolv'd to give her some small Portion, such as his mean Circumstances could afford, in order to see her settled in the World whilst he was alive, and at his Death to leave her possess'd of all that Providence and his own Industry had furnish'd him with.

Much about this Time, Monsieur de *Mortaigne* arrived from *Paris*: He was a young Gentleman descended from an ancient and honourable Family, who lived within a League of old *Mollard's* Habitation; his Father was possess'd of a plentiful Estate; but had a great Number of Children, of whom *Mortaigne* was the Eldest. He had been sometime Page to that generous and worthy Nobleman *M. de la Guiche*, Governor of *Lyons*; and after his Death, chief Gentleman to *M. de St. Terrant*, then Marshal of *France*, with whom he had lived a long Time in *Paris*, and practis'd all honourable Exercises, such as Fencing, Dancing, Coursing; and, in short, had learn'd all the necessary Qualifications of a complete Gentleman. He had a good Presence, an agreeable Air, and an engaging Behaviour; was of an affable and friendly Conversation, without Vanity or Affectation, and was as much esteem'd by the Marshal for his personal Merit, as for the Dignity of his Birth, and the Nobility of his Ancestors; but the Reason of his leaving him was this: Being informed that his Sister, *Mademoiselle de la Hay*, was shortly to be marry'd to Monsieur de *Cassailles*, a Gentleman of *Avergne*, he was very desirous of being present at the Nuptials; and therefore he took Leave of *M. de St. Terrant*, and return'd Home.

It is impossible to express the Joy of the indulgent Father, and the Transports of the tender Mother at the Arrival of their favourite Son; his Sisters were, as it were, ravish'd with Delight to see him, and in short, nothing but Gladness and smiling Satisfaction appear'd in the Countenances of the whole Family at his Approach; insomuch, that

that the Nuptials of his Sister, lay as it were buried in Oblivion, to express their Kindness to the brave *Mortaigne*, who after he had entertain'd them with a Relation of his Adventures during his Absence, express'd his Approbation for the intended Marriage.

After the Ceremony was over, and the Nuptials solemniz'd with all imaginary Splendor, he conducted his Sister to *Avergne*, and after a short Stay there, returned again to his Father's; where passing a few Weeks in the solitary Amusements of a Country Life, he began to grow weary with the Simplicity of rural Diversions, and impatient to behold the dazzling Lustre of a Court, and the gay Variety which he had always been accusom'd to, he craved Leave of his Father to Return to *Paris*; who after many Arguments and Persuasions to continue with him, which he found was to no purpose, at last consented to let him go; but the Night before he was to depart, his Father was taken dangerously ill of a Fever, insomuch, that his Life was despaired of, which made him lay aside all Thoughts of pursuing his Journey, and apply himself to get Relief for the Recovery of his Father's Health; which by his Diligence and Care he happily effected, and his Father soon after recover'd; but being weak and feeble by Reason of the Infirmities of his Age, he intreated him to stay, and spend the Remainder of the Summer with him, to which he consented, though with some Reluctance.

Being now forced, as it were, against his Will to live in the Country, and being at some Distance from any Gentleman's Seat, where he might spend his leisure Time in agreeable Conversation, he apply'd himself to Hunting, in order to divert his Melancholy; this Diversion in time became so delightful to him, that one Day he was so eager after the Chase, that he lost himself in the Woods, and being unacquainted with the Avenues, he wander'd for a long Time, 'till with Madness, and Rage, and the Fatigue of Walking, he was almost spent, and being unable to hold out much longer, he at last spied a little Cottage upon the Brink of a River, which ran silently along the Foot of a very high Hill. Thither he directed his Course, and as soon as he got out of the Wood, he perceived an elderly Man labouring in a Vineyard just before him, to whom he apply'd in a very obliging Manner for Relief; the old Man looking earnestly at him, and observing the Features and Lineaments of his Face, enquir'd his Name, he answer'd

very courteously, that his Name was *Mortaigne*, eldest Son to *M. de Coucie*, and that he should be highly obliged to him for a little Refreshment, being weary and almost faint for want of Nourishment. The old Man was overjoy'd to have it in his Power to relieve the Son of so worthy a Gentleman as *M. de Coucie*; and looked upon it as a divine Providence that had directed him thither, in order to reconcile a small Difference between him and the young Gentleman's Father. He therefore very frankly told him, that his Name was *Mollard*; and that if he would please to accept of such Refreshments as his poor Cottage could afford, he was ready to conduct him thither, and should think himself happy in the Enjoyment of so noble a Guest; *Mortaigne* very readily embraced the profer'd Kindness, and went with him to the old Man's Habitation. As soon as he was enter'd, *Mollard* immediately dispatch'd his Daughter *Fasselina*, whom we have already mention'd, for Wine, and in the mean Time, he himself brought him Pears, Walnuts, Grapes, and other Fruits, such as the Season afforded; *Fasselina* soon return'd, and with a peculiar Grace presented it to *Mortaigne*, who receiv'd it with a Chearfulness not to be express'd.

After he had refresh'd himself, and was a little recover'd from the Fatigues of Wandering, he began to relate to them in what Manner he was bewilder'd, and how joyful he was when he spied their little Cottage; and after expressing his Gratitude for the kind Reception he had met with, he diverted them with an Account of the Manners and Customs of the Court of *France*, with the Grandeur of their Palaces, the Splendor and Magnificence of their publick Entertainments, and his own Adventures, during his Stay at *Paris*: To all which, *Fasselina* listen'd so attentively, that her Eyes were scarce ever off from *Mortaigne*, which gave him an Opportunity of surveying the Features of her Face.

He perceived something so innocent in her Behaviour, and so charming in her Countenance, that he could no longer behold her with Indifference, but gaz'd on her with Admiration, as an Object worthy his Love.

For indeed, she was very beautiful; her Eyes were black and piercing, her Hair was of the same Colour, her Complexion was fair and blooming, her Features round and well proportion'd, her Neck and Hands were beautifully shaped, and so exquisitely white, that her azure Veins appear'd with the brightest Transparency

Transparency through the delicate Texture of her Skin, her Breasts were round and full, and her Waist was tall and slender; in short, she had all the external Ornaments of Beauty, and the internal Beauties of her Mind were not inferior to that of her outward form; her Conversation was innocent and sprightly, her Behaviour modest, but not reserv'd, she was of a mild and gentle Disposition; and every Thing she did was with an unaffected Simplicity.

It was no Wonder, therefore that an Object so divinely beautiful, without either Art or Dress to heighten her native Charms, should engage all his Attention: He gaz'd and lov'd, and was confus'd; and he perceived at the same Time the Emotions of Love clad with Innocence and Modesty to discompose the Serenity of her Thoughts, and to rise often in confus'd Blushes, and dissolve again in artless Sighs. This was sufficient to convince him that he was not altogether indifferent to her; and therefore he was resolv'd to pursue the Dictates of his Inclination, and to make a complete Conquest, even at the Expence of his Honour.

Possess'd with this Resolution, he took his Leave, returning the old Man Thanks for his extraordinary Civilities, and assuring him at the same Time, that he wanted nothing but an Opportunity to reward his Humanity with the most convincing Proofs of Gratitude. *Mollard* told him, that he looked upon it as a Blessing from Heaven, that he had had it in his Power to relieve so worthy a Gentleman, and that if he would use his Interest to make up an Action of Trespass which his Father had enter'd against him, he should think himself sufficiently rewarded. *Mortaigne* pleas'd with this Opportunity so favourable to his Design, solemnly assur'd him that he would do him all the Service that lay in his Power, and that he would soon Return and let him know his Father's Resolution; and so he departed, and the old Man directed him the nearest Way to his Father's Seat.

Whilst he was upon the Road, his Thoughts were busied in the Contemplation of *Fasselina's* Perfections, and in comparing her mean Dress, her artless Innocence, her blooming Charms, and sprightly Carriage; with the dazzling Ornaments, the borrow'd Complexion, and the haughty Behaviour of Ladies of the first Quality; he could not help admiring the Beauty of Nature, and despising the Vanity of Art.

Full

Full of these Reflections, he enter'd his Father's House, where he found the whole Family in Confusion, imagining that some unhappy Accident had befallen him in the Woods, because no one could learn what was become of him; a sudden Joy however, succeeded this gloomy Apprehension, and at the Sight of him, his Father grew chearful, his Mother dry'd her watery Eyes, and appear'd brisk and lively, and all their Confusion was turned into Calmness and Serenity: He acquainted his Father and Mother with what had happen'd, how he lost himself, and how kindly he was entertained at old *Mollard's*; and withal, begg'd to have the Affair between his Father and *Mollard* brought to an amicable Conclusion, since he had treated him with so much Civility and Respect. The old Gentleman assured him, that on his Account he would lay aside the Prosecution, and bury in Oblivion all former Differences; so they concluded the Night with Mirth and Feasting, being overjoy'd to find *Mortaigne* in Safety.

Being now pretty late, and he very weary, he betook himself to rest, and ruminating on the Actions of the Day, he fell into a deep Sleep, when presently he thought himself transported into a very delightful Valley, adorn'd with sunny Hills, shady Groves, delightful Plains, green Meadows, and clear Springs, and interspersed with all the gay Variety and balmy fragancy of blooming Flowers. Whilst he was admiring the wonderful Harmony of Nature in the Order of this delightful Landskip, there appeared at some Distance, a grave old Man, clad in a long white Robe, with a Turbant on his Head, and a Rod in his Hand, who made up to him; and in a very friendly Manner, thus accosted him; *O generous Mortaigne, says he, shun the Charms of matchless Beauty, and contemplate the Wisdom of the divine Creator*; then waving his Rod in the Air, the Clouds thicken'd, the Sun was darken'd, the Hills levell'd, the Grass wither'd, the Flowers decay'd, the springs turned into Blood; and in short, the whole Face of Nature was in an Instant chang'd, and nothing but Horror and Confusion was to be seen; insomuch, that the Terror of this dismal Prospect waked him out of his Sleep; and musing with himself on the Oddness of this Vision, and perplex'd with the dismal Apprehensions of some impending Danger, he got up early in the Morning, and betook himself to his Study to divert his melancholy Thoughts by reading, 'till the rest of the Family

mily was stirring. The first thing he set his Eyes upon, was the Description of the River *Lignon* (which runs by the side of *Mollard's* Habitation) in the Poem called *Astræa*, already Mention'd. This brought fresh into his Memory the Charms of the fair *Jasseline*. He was impatient to see her, and all on fire to enjoy her; and being no longer able to withstand the inward Impulse of his Passion, he got up in a kind of Disorder and went directly to old *Mollard's*, whom he found labouring in his Vineyard; he immediately acquainted him, that his Father had agreed to forgive all past Offences, and was willing to live in a friendly Manner for the Future; and, in order thereto, desired to treat with him personally without Delay; that the Desire he had to shew his Gratitude, would not suffer him to rest one Moment 'till he had made him acquainted with his Father's Resolution. Old *Mollard* was overwhelm'd with Joy at the News, and immediately dress'd himself in the best Manner he could, and set out for *M. de Coucie's*, not suspecting any Deceit in *Mortaigne's* extraordinary Civility.

Mean while *Mortaigne* address'd himself to *Jasseline*; and first of all presenting her with Jewels, Rings, and other curious Ornaments which he had brought from *Paris*, he then declared his Passion in the melting transports of warm Imagination: He sigh'd, and prest her heaving Breasts with unspeakable Raptures, and whisper'd all the tender Things which Lovers only can express: It was, he said, the Almighty Disposer of all Things, that had, by a wonderful Providence, convey'd him to the Knowledge of the fairest Object of the whole Creation; and it was the same divine Power that now favour'd their mutual Enjoyment of the Sweets of Love; then clasping her in his eager Arms, endeavour'd to stifle her Resentments with fond Endearments, and kind Embraces, but to no purpose; for tho' Love and Rage mingl'd together, had hitherto made her Silent, yet she burst forth at last in Floods of Tears, and in faltering Words and broken Accents she thus reproached him. "Is it in
" this Manner, cruel *Mortaigne*, that you endeavour to re-
" ward my Father's Kindness, and my own Simplicity? And
" can you, at the same Time, be so profane as to bring the
" Gods to favour your wicked Enterprizes, and not tremble
" lest their Vengeance should over-take you? Do you think
" that Poverty and Innocence are incomparable? If you do, it
" betrays a Cowardice beneath the Honour of a Gentleman,
" to

“ to take the Advantage? Or do you think I love you, and
 “ for that Reason, endeavour to make me Infamous to the
 “ World, Loathsome to myself, and a Shame to my aged
 “ Father?” Pierced to the Heart with the Justice of these
 Reproaches, *Mortaigne* stood, as it were, Thunder-struck.
 And now perceiving that neither Prayers, nor Intreaties,
 nor the Force of Eloquence, nor even Gold itself, had
 power to corrupt *Jasselina*’s Chastity; and being resolv’d
 to stick at nothing to accomplish his base Intentions, he had
 recourse to Oaths, and the most profidious Diffimulation;
 he assured her that what he had done was only to try her
 Virtue and her Constancy; and that if he was before
 charm’d with the Comeliness of her Person, he was now
 ravish’d with the unspotted Beauties of her Mind; he call’d
 Heaven to witness that he had no Design upon her Inno-
 cence; but that, notwithstanding the Difference of her
 Birth and Fortune, he was determin’d to make her his Wife.
 With this Artifice, sealed with the most solemn and sacred
 Oaths made in the Presence of Almighty God, the fair,
 the young, the innocent *Jasselina* was betray’d, and yield-
 ed to the lewd Embraces of the deceitful *Mortaigne*.

By this Time *Mollard* was return’d, and finding *Mor-
 taigne* still there, and his Daughter in a sort of Confusion,
 began to suspect what had happen’d, and bearing a watch-
 ful Eye afterwards over his Daughter, perceived to his un-
 speakable Sorrow, that she was with Child. It is hardly
 possible to describe *Mollard*’s frantick Rage on this Dis-
 covery; he tore his white Hair, and wept bitterly, and call’d
 upon the Gods to revenge his Sorrows, and his Daughter’s
 Dishonour on the ungrateful *Mortaigne*; he cursed the
 Hour of his Birth, and the Day whereon he relieved him;
 he loaded his Daughter likewise with bitter Imprecations
 for being the Cause of his Misery, and the unhappy In-
 strument of bringing his gray Hairs with Sorrow to the
 Grave; insomuch, that the unhappy *Jasselina*, finding no
 Peace, or Consolation from the Fury of an incensed Father,
 pray’d *Mortaigne* to think on his Vows, and to convince her
 Father of her Innocence, and the Integrity of her Heart, by
 a speedy Performance of those Promises, than which nothing
 could have oblig’d her to violate her Chastity? Upon which,
 he came privately in the Night, and stole her away from
 her Father’s House, and sent her to a poor Kinsman’s of
 his, ten Leagues from *Durency*, where she was brought to
 Bed of a Son; yet he resolv’d never to marry her, but rather
 triumph’d

triumph'd in his Conquest, and the Miseries which he had brought upon the unhappy *Jassolina*.

In the mean Time, *Mortaigne's* Mother being ignorant of this Affair, was solicitous to see her Son married; and therefore she made a Visit to *M. de Vasse*, in order to propose a Match between him and *Mademoiselle la Varina*, only Daughter to *M. de Vasse*. The Motion was approv'd of; the young Couple see and love, so that nothing, to all human Appearance, could hinder this Marriage from being speedily consummated, had not Heaven decreed it otherwise.

For *Jassolina* being inform'd of what had pass'd, began now to despair of ever being the Wife of the perfidious *Mortaigne*; and whilst she was bewailing her own deplorable Condition, News was brought her of the Death of her Father, who had laid her Shame so much to Heart, that it had shorten'd his Days, and so exasperated him, that upon his Death-bed, he had bequeathed all his Effects to his distant Relations, and disinherited his own Daughter, the miserable *Jassolina*: Alas! what Tongue can express the Torments of deluded Innocence? What Breast conceive the Anguish of her distracted Soul? Her Father's Death, her own Infamy, her Infant's Misery continually presented themselves before her wherever she turn'd; and to complete this miserable Scene, Poverty began to shew itself in all the dismal Forms of Hunger, Cold, Nakedness, Shame, and Contempt. Whilst she was in this lamentable Condition, she resolv'd to write *Mortaigne* a Letter, to try if common Humanity would not prevail upon him to take Compassion upon her and her Infant's Calamities; which was to this Effect:

JASSELINA to MORTAIGNE.

YOU have depriv'd me of my Honour, and with it all Hopes of Happiness in this Life; Your sacred Oaths and Vows of everlasting Love made in the Presence of Almighty God, prevail'd upon me to consent to your Embraces; and I tremble to think of the dreadful Consequences that will attend the Breach of them. But, dearest *Mortaigne*, if the Remembrance of these will not move you to your Duty, let the Innocence of my Youth, and the Sweetness of my Charms prevail upon you to commiserate my Sufferings, and relieve my Distress. You know, ungrateful Man, that for your Sake, I have been the fatal Cause of

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my Father's Death; that for your Sake, he has disinherited me, and left me nothing but the Remembrance of my Iniquity for my Support. Can you, therefore, be so base as not to grant me a comfortable Subsistence; or if you can, can you be so monstrously wicked, as to refuse a Maintenance to the Infant to whom you gave a Being. Can the lovely Mortaigne divest himself of the Ties of Nature and Humanity, and cloath himself with Cruelty and Injustice. No, it is impossible, there's something so divinely just in all his Thoughts, and all his Actions, that will not suffer him to forget his Vows to Jasselina, nor his paternal Duty to his own Image.

JASSELINA.

After she had done writing this Letter, being desirous to get what Assistance she could, she wrote another to *Calintha*, *Mortaigne's* Mother, which was as follows :

JASSELINA to CALINTHA

I *Am at a Loss in what Manner to address myself to you, or how to relate my Misfortunes, and express my Misery. Had your Son Mortaigne been as kind as cruel, I should not have troubled you with a Relation of my Unhappiness. But alas! when sacred Oaths and solemn Vows lose their divine Energy, and become Matter only for Ridicule, how can Virtue itself be Proof against the Delusions of Men. If these, Madam, had been of any Weight, I need not have blush'd, as I now do, to have told you that I was the Mother of a Son, who owes its Being to the perfidious Mortaigne. Hence alas! is the Source of all my Calamities; since not only Mortaigne refuses to perform his Vows, but even denies me the Necessaries of Life to support myself and Son; and what adds still more to my Misfortunes, is, that my Father being highly incensed at my Guilt, died soon after my Shame was discover'd, and depriv'd me on his Death-Bed of what Right and Nature had promised me, and given me just Pretensions to; so that having now no Relation to assist me, no Friend to comfort me, nor no Consolation in this my miserable Distress, I have presum'd with Tears and Supplications to implore your Pity and Compassion, if not for mine, yet for your Son's sake, who, if I perish, can never think to prosper. My Love for him will, I hope, in some Measure excuse the Folly of my Youth;*
and

and merit your Relief, at least the Innocence of my Infant can plead the Right of Nature in its behalf; and therefore, if I suffer, it will be some Consolation even in the Agonies of Death, to be assur'd, that the innocent Infant will not suffer for the Guilt of its injur'd Mother, the unhappy

JASSELINA.

As soon as *Mortaigne* and his Mother had received these Letters, they were differently affected. *Mortaigne* laugh'd at the foolish Ambition of *Jasselina*, and rejoiced at the Opportunity he had to insult her fond Credulity. He look'd upon her Youth and Innocence with Disdain, and upon her Sufferings with Contempt. Her Love he scorn'd, and neglected her Supplications. The Infant she was so solicitous about, he regarded as the spurious Offspring of lascivious Wantonnefs, and look'd upon it rather as a Mark of Infamy and Disgrace, than a Son; and thus in spite of Nature and Humanity, he resolved to banish them both for ever from his Memory, and to take no further Care, either to return an Answer, or provide a Maintenance; but to continue his Addresses to his new Mistress, the beautiful *Varina*.

Such was the unparrallel'd Cruelty of *Mortaigne*; and as for his Mother *Calintha*, so soon as she had read the Letter, fir'd with Wrath and Indignation against *Jasselina* and her Infant, she disdainfully tore it to Pieces; nay, her Malice was carry'd to such a Degree, that she heartily wish'd that she could privately dispatch them both, lest they should prove a Hindrance to the intended Marriage of her Son. Alas! how cruel and unnatural were her Resolutions! Was it not sufficient to atone for her Indiscretion, that she had suffer'd Pain and Poverty, Infamy and Contempt.

It is very certain, that if *Jasselina* was guilty of an Error in believing *Mortaigne's* fallacious Promises: *Calintha's* Malice was much more inexcusable; because the former was betray'd by Love, the latter fir'd only with Ambition. It was not out of an Abhorrence to *Jasselina's* Crime that she wished her murder'd, but lest her Son's Villainy should be discovered, and hinder his Preferment. It was plain, however, that this was her Intention, for she not only denied sending them any Relief herself, but she strictly enjoin'd her Son not to grant, either the Mother or the Infant the least Assistance; and to convince *Jasselina* of her Intentions, she wrote the following Letter:

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CALINTHA

CALINTHA to JASSELINA.

I Am not more astonish'd at your endeavouring to delude and undo my Son, than at your Assurance in soliciting me for Relief from those Calamities which your own Wickedness brought upon you: But since your Body is unchaste, it is not so much to be wonder'd at, that your Judgment should be defective; and certainly it must be so, to imagine, that when your own Father disinherited you, I, who am but a mere Stranger to you, (as I wish you had been to my Son) should relieve you: Neither does this Resolution of mine proceed from Contempt, but Charity; for as you are a Woman, I pity you; but as a Strumpet I despise you, and look upon it as a Crime to succour or support you. But being conscious of your own Infirmities, and despairing of any Assistance for yourself, you plead for your Infant; but as he is the Object of your Shame, as you are of that of my Son, and the Cause of it, why should I look upon the Child with Compassion, when the Mother has deserved both my Hatred and Contempt. You complain of your Misfortune and Misery, without considering the Baseness of your Birth, and the Disgrace you are likely to bring on me and my Family. And to make yourself still more Odious, you add Ambition to your Dishonesty, and impudently assume a Right to claim my Son in Marriage, and to tax him with Ingratitude and Treachery in betraying your Innocence, and violating your Chastity. But at the same time, do you consider, that his Love for you has been Cruelty to himself; for as you are like to buy his Familiarity with Tears, so, for what I know, he may have Cause to buy your's with Repentance. If you expect any Comfort, it must be no other than this, That as my Son disdains to marry you, so do I, that either myself or he relieve you: Look then on yourself with Shame, on your Infant with Repentance, whilst my Son and I will remember you both with Contempt, but neither with Pity.

CALINTHA.

The unfortunate *Jasselina* needed no more than this Letter to make her completely miserable; for being abandon'd by *Mortaigne*, and hated by his Mother, she was so pierc'd with the Consideration of *Calintha's* Cruelty, and the Remembrance of her Son's Disdain, that she had
not

not Patience to bear the Weight of her unhappy Fate ; but instantly with her Infant at her Breast, fell on the Ground in a Swoon, and had not the Noise of her Fall alarm'd those in the next Room, who came to her Assistance, Death had then put an End to her Misery, and freed her from those Calamities, she was afterwards expos'd to, by the Inhumanity of *Calintha*, and the Cruelty of *Mortaigne*.

For *Calintha* being inform'd that *Jasselina* was at a poor Relation's House, gave secret Orders to turn her out of Doors ; which was done with so much Severity, that she was not suffer'd to remain in the House 'till Day-Light should favour her Departure : But forced to lie expos'd to the Inclemency of the Weather, in an open Field, where the bare Ground was her Bed, a Mole-hill her Pillow, the cold Air her Covering, and the Firmament her Canopy ; in this deplorable Condition she bewail'd the Unhappiness that had always attended her from the Time she first beheld *Mortaigne* ; she accused her Folly in believing his Enticements ; she consider'd her too fond Credulity as the Source of all her Calamities, and the Cause of her Father's Death, her Infant's Infamy, and all the Miseries she was expos'd to.

Being now almost perish'd with Cold and Hunger, she remov'd to a neighbouring Wood, in order to shelter herself from the impending Rain ; and having made a Bed of Leaves, which at that Season of the Year fell very plentifully from the Trees, she laid her Infant upon it, and covering it up warm, she went and gather'd Blackberries, Slows, wild Chestnuts, and other Fruits that grew in the Woods, to satisfy her Hunger. In this Manner she spent the Night, and at Break of Day, taking her Infant in her Arms, she mounted a very high Hill, where she had a Prospect of the neighbouring Valley. Whilst she was surveying the Country round about, she discover'd a little Village, which by its Situation, she knew to be *Villepont*. This Discovery gave her some Comfort, because it lay within seven Leagues of the Place of her Nativity ; and therefore she did not Doubt of finding an Opportunity to send to her Relations and Friends whom she was sure would relieve her Distress, by reason of the many Favours she had heap'd upon them during her Prosperity. But alas ! Diversity of Fortune produces unconceivable Alterations ; Those who had profess'd the sincerest Friendship when Fortune smiled upon her, were now the farthest

theft from affording her any Assistance in her Adversity. She now found none to relieve her, nor none to pity her; insomuch, that Necessity forced her to apply herself to the Principal Inhabitants of the Town for Charity; to whom she related the Story of her Wrongs in such a moving Manner, that all of them promised her Redress.

In the mean Time, *De Vasse*y hearing of these Things in *La Palisse*, began to entertain a very mean Opinion of *Mortaigne*; and therefore he inform'd his Daughter *Varina* of the whole Story, who instantly conceived an Aversion against him for his ungenerous Behaviour to poor *Jasseline*. *Mortaigne* perceiving this by the cold Reception he met with in the Family, and being conscious of his own base Proceedings, was afraid to search the Cause of this sudden Alteration, 'till he had removed the only Impediments which he thought were likely to hinder him from the Enjoyment of his beloved *Varina*. And the better to Effect his barbarous Resolution, he dissembled his Malice to *Jasseline*, and sent his Servant to provide handsome Lodgings for her, and to give Orders to furnish her with all the Necessaries and Conveniences of Life; as also to let her know that he had provided a Nurse for his Son: But withal, to enjoin her to Secrecy, lest his Mother *Calintha* should be inform'd of it. *Jasseline* not suspecting any Deceit from *Mortaigne*'s extraordinary Civility, flatter'd herself that her Misfortunes were now at an End; but alas! no sooner does Pleasure take Possession of a Heart, but Pain constantly succeeds it; and so it fared with *Jasseline*; for *Mortaigne* having now contrived every thing in Order to execute his barbarous Design, sent his Servant, *La Verdure*, for the Infant, in order, as he said, to carry it to the Nurse which his Master had provided for it. *Jasseline* readily consented to let it go, thinking that Nature had wrought upon *Mortaigne* to take Care of its Maintenance; but *La Verdure*, in Obedience to his Master's Command, strangled the Child, as soon as he had got at a convenient Distance from the City, and wrapping its dead Body in a Linnen Cloth, threw it into the River *Lignon*.

When *La Verdure* return'd, he acquainted his Master with what he had done, who not satisfied with the Murder of the innocent Infant, agreed with *La Palma*, (the Master of *Jasseline*'s Lodgings) and the aforesaid *La Verdure*, for a certain Sum of Money to dispatch *Jasseline* in the
same

same Manner : This they soon effected, by taking an Opportunity to stifle her whilst she was asleep; and in the Middle of the Night, when all were gone to Rest, they convey'd her Body into the Garden, and there buried it : Having thus finish'd this bloody Scene, they both hasten to *Durency*, in order to receive their Reward, which *Mortaigne* paid them with Chearfulness; having now, as he thought, nothing to hinder him from appearing an agreeable Match for the fair *Varina*.

Mortaigne immediately prepared to Visit *De Vasse*, and to reconcile the Breach between him and *Varina*; and the better to succeed in his Design, he took his Father *M. de Coucie* along with him; but all his Foresight proved ineffectual; for *De Vasse* and his Daughter having heard that *Fasselina* and her Son were convey'd away, and could not be heard of, (suspecting what had happen'd) gave *Mortaigne* a plain Denial, and so he and his Father were forced to return without affecting any thing to the Purpose.

In the mean Time, *La Palma* having spent most of the Money which he had received for the Murder of *Fasselina*, in Riot and Debauchery, thought it high Time to return home to his Wife *Isabella*, who was ignorant of what had pass'd, and therefore very jealous of her Husband, because he departed, as she thought, in Company with *Fasselina*. But this Jealousy of her's God made the Instrument to discover this execrable Murder.

For upon his return Home, *Isabella* falling in a violent Passion, made use of many bitter Reflections against *La Palma*, which so incensed him, that he beat her in a barbarous Manner, insomuch that her Life was despaired of. Upon which he was immediately seiz'd, carried before a Magistrate, and committed to Prison. Soon after *Isabella* recovered, and being called upon to declare the Occasion of the Quarrel, she related all that had passed, that her Husband and *Fasselina* were supposed to have gone off together; that he had been absent a Month; and that *Fasselina* had not been heard of since, which gave her Reason to believe that if she was not his Mistress, he was her Murderer; and added that her Maid *Jaqueta* could inform them further.

Jaqueta was immediately sent for and examin'd : She declared, that the Night before her Master's Departure, *La Palma*, and one *La Verdure*, a Footman, were in *Fasselina*'s Room together; and that they could learn nothing
of

of her since ; being further asked, if she knew whose Footman it was ; she answer'd, Monsieur *Mortaigne's*. The Magistrates considering these Depositions, resolv'd to search thoroughly into the Affair ; and so discharging *Isabella* and her Maid, they gave Orders that *La Palma* should be brought before them, and after they had severely reprimanded him for his Barbarity to his Wife, they charg'd him with being in *Jasselina's* Chamber with *La Verdu*re at Mid-night ; since which she could not be heard of.

La Palma's Guilt appeared visible in his Countenance, which commonly betrays an inward Conviction of Mind. He seem'd to wave what he was charg'd with, and began with bitter Invectives against the Malice and Jealousy of his Wife ; but being urged by the Magistrates to answer directly to the Purpose, after many Circumlocutions, and frivolous and extravagant Speeches, he at last deny'd the whole Accusation, and maintain'd, that he neither was present at her Departure, nor knew what was become of her ; and therefore he desir'd to be released.

But the Procurator, being very familiar with Monsieur *de Vasse*y of *La Palisse*, remember'd that he had formerly heard him speak of this Monsieur *Mortaigne*, who lately sought his Daughter *La Varina* in Marriage ; as also of his debauching *Jasselina*, a Farmer's Daughter of *Durency*, by whom he had an illegitimate Son ; and considering, that at such an unseasonable Hour *La Verdu*re could have no lawful Business in *Jasselina's* Chamber, accompany'd only with *La Palma* ; and that it was a very surprizing Circumstance that no Body could learn what was become of her since that Time, concluded that there must be a deeper Mystery in this Affair, than had as yet been discovered ; and therefore gave Orders not to suffer *La Palma* to have his Liberty ; but to be removed privately to *La Palisse*, together with his Wife and Maid, in order to take his Trial. Monsieur *de Vasse*y, who was Senescal of that Jurisdiction, purposely retired into the Country to avoid being present, because he vehemently suspected that Monsieur *Mortaigne* had a Hand in the Affair. *La Palma*, and the Witnesses were examin'd Face to Face, and *Jaqueta* stood firmly to her former Deposition, but *La Palma* as strongly denied it ; but being order'd to the Rack, he was not able to endure the severe Torments, but confess'd that he and *La Verdu*re stifled *Jasselina* in her Bed, and buried her Body in his Garden ; and that they were hired to do it by Monsieur

seur *Mortaigne*, who gave them two hundred Franks to effect it.

Whereupon they immediately dispatch'd proper Officers to apprehend *Mortaigne* and his Servant, and to bring them to Justice; and having found *Mortaigne* in his Bed, they seiz'd him by Force, and brought him to *La Palisse*, whither they had already sent *La Verdure*, having met him upon the Road, little suspecting his approaching Destiny.

La Verdure, notwithstanding *La Palma's* Confession, obstinately denied the Fact, and endeavour'd to clear his Master from the Imputation of so much Cruelty and Injustice; but upon presenting his Feet to the Fire, he confessed not only the Murder of *Jasselina*, but that also of the little Infant, in the Manner already related.

Mortaigne was now summon'd to appear before the Procurator, and the rest of the Magistrates, and being charg'd to plead to his Indictment, he knew it was in vain to deny those Crimes which his cruel Agents had already revealed; and therefore, with Shame and Confusion, he confess'd himself Guilty; and reflecting with Horror on the Wickedness of his depraved Nature that had led him to the Commission of the most abominable and barbarous Crimes that ever were perpetrated by the vilest Monster upon Earth, he submitted patiently to the Sentence pronounced against him; which was, to be broken on the Wheel, his Body to be burnt, and his Ashes to be scatter'd in the Air. *La Palma* was condemn'd to be hang'd; and *La Verdure* to be broken on the Wheel, and his Body thrown into the River *Lignon*.

Mortaigne appeared very sorrowful, and could not refrain Tears whenever he thought of the unhappy *Jasselina*; his Ingratitude, his Treachery, his Barbarity, presented themselves alternately to his tortur'd Imagination. His Inhumanity to his little Infant likewise gave him much Uneasiness, and added to the Agonies of his departing Moments.

Amidst all the Terrors of his Conscience, he pray'd Forgiveness of God, and begg'd that Mankind might learn from his Example to restrain their Passions, and not to suffer themselves to be sway'd beyond the Bounds of Reason and Humanity to gratify their boundless Desires. When he was brought to the Place of Execution, he was extremely concerned that the Judges had not pass'd a more favourable
 I Sentence

Sentence upon him ; and suffer'd him at least to die like a Gentleman ; that was, to have been beheaded. But at the same Time reflecting upon the Nature of his Crimes, he acknowledg'd the Justice of their Decree ; and turning to the Executioner, desired him to do his Office, and to dispatch him quickly out of this Life, as being unworthy to remain any longer in it. This was the fatal End of this unhappy Gentleman, cut off in the Flower of his Youth, as an Example of the Almighty Vengeance over-taking those who commit Murder.

La Palma exclaim'd against the Malice and Jealousy of his Wife *Isabella*, even to the last Moments of his Life ; and could by no means be brought to a Reconciliation, but continued obstinate and impenitent, being a Man of a very profligate and wicked Life, regardless of the Punishments upon Earth, and unconcern'd at those in a future State.

La Verdure, when he was upon the Wheel, complain'd of *Mortaigne*, as the Cause of his Infamy and Misery, and shew'd great Concern for the Cruelty he had exercis'd upon the Bodies of the innocent Infant, and unfortunate Mother.

And this was the infamous End of these unhappy Men, whom Lasciviousness and Avarice had prompted to perpetrate the greatest Villanies ; and at last had brought down divine Vengeance upon them ; which was executed here on Earth, before a Multitude of Spectators, as a Means to deter others from falling into the same fatal Errors, which was the Cause of their Destruction.

REFLECTIONS

On the foregoing

HISTORY.

IT is an excellent Virtue in Women not to listen to the lewd temptations of Men ; and it is a noble Resolution, and worthy the Dignity of Men to withstand the Delusion of Vice, and to curb the Violence of unruly Passions. If Women

men submit to the former, it will most certainly bring them to Shame; and if Men give way to the latter, it will as certainly bring them to Destruction.

It has indeed, been observed by Men of the deepest Penetration, that the Vanity of our Imaginations, and the Follies and Extravagances of our Youth are often followed with Disappointments and Distress; and that Schemes of venal Pleasure, how artfully soever they be contrived, are attended with so many Difficulties in the Execution, that few are able to surmount; and those who do, are still more unhappy in the Conclusion. If, therefore, these be the Effects of the little Frailties of our Nature, which Beauty and the Force of Fancy may insensibly lead us into, What must the dreadful Consequences be, when we violate the Laws of Humanity, and perpetrate the blackest Villanies in Contempt of divine Vengeance, to gratify our Resentments, and make way for our Ambition?

One would think it impossible for a Being endued with the Faculties of a rational Soul, capable of distinguishing between Virtue and Vice, Justice and Injustice, and even of drawing a long Chain of Consequences from the most remote Causes; One, I say, would hardly think it possible for such a Being to engage himself in so many monstrous Crimes, and complicated Villainies, as is related in the foregoing History. But such is the Depravity of some Mens Natures, and the Wickedness of their Dispositions, that they delight in Cruelty and Ingratitude; and, as it were, triumph in the Miseries and Calamities of those whom they have injured and betray'd; and such we find was the Character of the Man who gave Birth to the foregoing most remarkable History.

But since it is most certain, that in the Day of Judgment we shall strictly answer at God's dreadful Tribunal, not only for every idle Word, but even for every lewd and wicked Thought our Hearts shall conceive; how then shall we dare to appear (much less think to escape) when we defile our Bodies which are sanctified, with odious Pollution? and to this, add the staining our Souls with the innocent Blood of our Fellow Christians: Thus with impious Presumption, stabbing at the tremendous Majesty of God, by murdering those Creatures, who bear his Image. This is not the Way to arrive at certain Felicity, but the Way to eternal Misery; for how can we present ourselves to God, or expect the Enjoyment of a Being of infinite Purity, Holiness, and Goodness, when in
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the Flames of Lust, and broiling with Revenge, we devote ourselves to the blackest Crimes in the Devil's Service. Nay, did we either love God for his Mercy, or fear him for his Justice, we should not only hate those Sins in ourselves, but detest them with the utmost Horror in others; for these are such great and crying Offences, that the All-seeing Eye of Heaven suffers them not to go unpunish'd exemplarily here on Earth, Divine Justice overtaking the Offenders, by the Sword of his Magistrates. A sad Example whereof we have here presented to your View, but not for your Imitation. May the Catastrophe so impress our Minds, that it may tend to the Reformation of our Lives, the Comfort of our Souls, and the eternal Glory of the infinite Just, Holy, and All-powerful Creator.



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The HISTORY of
Beatrice Joana and Alsemero.

NUMB. IV.



HERE lived in *Valencia*, a City of *Spain*, a young Gentleman, named *Pedro de Alsemero*, who, after the Death of his Father *Juan Alsemero*, in a naval Engagement with the *Hollanders* before *Gibraltar*, devoted himself to Sea Actions as the best Expedient, in his Sentiments, to prove his Valour, and revenge the Loss in his Family. With this View he made two Voyages into the *West-Indies*, in both of which he gave such signal Marks of his Courage, that, in a short Time, he returned Home crowned with Honour, the Reward of his Expeditions: Nor was Fortune less a Friend to him in another Respect, having made him very opulent and rich; the Consideration of these fine Advantages confirmed him in the Resolution he had taken of extending his Name, and at last, of finishing his Acts with Immortality. His Ambition to Fame was by so much the more active and

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prompting

prompting, as the Flower of his Youth had met with such remarkable Success; no Moment past but what represented to him a Scene of future Exploits; in the Performance of which, he thought his Honour concerned. This Reflection redoubled the native Ardor of his Soul, and his innate Bravery flamed with Eagerness of surpassing others. Hence also was derived his Resolution of founding his Characteristic, upon which ground *Alarache* and *Mamsora* soon became Witnesses of his extraordinary and surprising Valour; for in the Engagements at these Places he received eleven Wounds, as a Testimonial of his Bravery. These Accidents, however, did not abate his unsurmountable Desire of Fame. The Death of Don *Juan* his Father remained fresh in his Mind, and he was resolved to vindicate his Memory to the last Extremity. Accordingly he went to *Valadolid*, with a Design to use his Interest with some Minister under the King of *Spain*, to procure him a Captain's Post, and a Company under the Archduke *Albertus*, then in open Arms against the *Netherlanders*. But *Alsemero* had scarcely begun his Suit, but he had the Mortification to find a general Truce on both Sides, concluded at the *Hague*, by the Mediation of *England* and *France*. His Hopes being thus disappointed, he seemed for some Time irresolute, and unable to find out what Step he ought next to take. *Mars* was his darling God, and the Clash of Arms his beloved Pleasure; the Effeminacy of Courts, and the Foibles of Women were averse to his Principles, and his sole Delight consisted in the Range of Armies, and the Sound of Trumpets. Actuated by these Sentiments, he withdrew from *Valadolid* to *Valentia*, resolving to exercise his Arms abroad, since he had been denied the Use of them at Home. Upon his Arrival, he had several Invitations from Personages of both Sexes, and extraordinary Quality; but Amusements of Gallantry, and Interviews of Love and Pleasure were not the Delights he wanted; Wars and Encounters were the Basis, on which he grounded his real Felicity; and as he had devoted himself to Campaigns, and the heroic Achievements of the Field, he was not to be won from the darling Recreations of his Mind, effeminately to unbend himself amidst the Interludes of Balls, Levees, or the Toilets of Ladies; in short, he was bent upon martial Exercises, and with that View, putting the Care of his Estate and Affairs into the best Situation he could, he embarked for *Malta*, with a Design to try if he could obtain some Post of Command,

mand, either in that Island, or the Gallies belonging to it ; and if he found himself disappointed, to sail thence into *Transilvania*, *Hungary*, and *Germany*, and there extend his Knowledge in viewing their Castles and Places of Defence, in learning their Arts of military Discipline, in remarking the Wealth and Power of their Princes, in considering the Plans of their several Laws and Constitutions ; and, finally, in reflecting upon all other Matters, conducive to form him either a complete Traveller, or an experienced Soldier. These were his Sentiments, and these his Resolutions ; and accordingly he came to *Alicant*, from whence he hoped to have found a Passage to *Naples*, and from thence to *Malta* ; but his ill-concerted Designs prove abortive, and his Schemes of travelling and fighting are frustrated ; for coming into the City, and going one Morning to hear Mass in the Church dedicated to the Holy Virgin there, he cast his Eyes, as he kneeled at his Devotion, on a young and charming Lady, in the same Posture of Worship, next to him. As she was beautiful, gay, and sprightly, and her Veil very thin, he had an easy Prospect of a Set of the finest Features in the World ; from the Moment he espied her, he fell a Victim to Love, and *Cupid* shot a Dart to his Heart, which with an irresistible Force, bore down all the Rampiers of Honour, Wars, and Alarms. His Passion was impatient, and he was by so much the more inflamed, as he perceived her Blush at his gazing upon her. He imagined it vain however, to prosecute his Amour at that Time, as he perceived her engaged in the Company of several other Ladies. But Mass being finished, he stepped up to a Priest, and enquired of him who the Lady was, who told him, she was Daughter of *Diego de Verman-dero*, Governor of the Castle of the City, and named *Dona Beatrice Joana*, and her Custom was every Morning about the same Hour to come to that Church, and pay her Devotions ; this Information inflamed *Alfemero*. *Beatrice*, from the Moment he heard her named, reign'd over the Passions of his Soul. *Bellona* now gives way to *Venus*, and *Mars* is postponed to *Cupid*. *Alfemero* was in Raptures, and his fierce Love told him, he was unhappy 'till he saw his Charmer. Actuated by his exteme Desire, he rose early the next Morning, and hoping to find his beloved *Beatrice*, he went to the Church, where, to his Joy, he espied her kneeling as before ; he placed himself by her in the same Posture, and his eager Passion pushing him on,

he addrested himself to her in the following Words; *My Charmer*, says he, *the two Mornings I have seen you, makes me think my Devotions have been attended with a more than ordinary Happiness, since I have had the Felicity to be so near your divine Person, and survey so fine a Set of Features, as adorn your Face; I am, Lady, let me presume to tell you, from this Moment, a Victim to your potent Eyes, and it is impossible for me to withstand the Power of Love, your beauteous and ravishing Person has thrown into my Soul. Upon this Motive, I beg you, my Charmer, to compassionate me, since the Violence of my Affection is so great, as not to live without a Return of your Kindness to me. This unexpected Speech, especially in a Church, could not but surprize Beatrice, who spoke her Astonishment by the Blushes she shewed underneath her Veil. As Alsemero was a Person unknown to her, and his Passion so sudden, she could not forbear giving Attention to his Words, and, at length, won by the genteel Air wherewith he had accosted her, she, putting on a graceful and modest Mien, returned him this Answer. Sir, I return you my Acknowledgements for the Compliments you have been pleased to give me; but I cannot impute your Declaration of being charmed with so mean a Person as mine, to any real Affection, but Flattery. To conquer you, Sir, must be the Business of those Ladies, who are by so much equal to your Worth, as I am inferior to your Merit; to them you must apply yourself, and if your Affection answers to what you have profest to me, you'll have no Reason, Sir, to doubt of your Success. This fine Excuse of Beatrice could not make Alsemero desist from his Pretensions; tho' he was but a Novice in the Affairs of Love, he was not so ignorant as to be vanquished by this first Repulse; he perceived the Beauties of her Mind were correspondent to the charming Perfections of her Face; and he was resolved to push on the Force of his Love, by an Experiment of his Eloquence and Address; to which End, he addrested her again, thus. My Charmer, 'tis a nice Piece of Ambition in you to dissemble the Beauty of your Face, with a Design to render your Charms the more conspicuous. I cannot, however, praise the Disregard you shew me in abandoning me to those Ladies whom I neither know nor care for; for 'tis to you alone, my fair One, I sacrifice my Love; and therefore it would not be honourable to make me, who am your constant Admirer, the Object of your Frowns and Displeasure."*

Alsemero

Alfemero had no sooner made an End of these Words; but *Beatrice* resumed herself, and thus answered: *Women of my Condition and Fortune ought neither to be ambitious or politic, unless in those Conjunctures when Necessity obliges them to guard against the delusive Speeches of Gentlemen like you; who, not guided by the Touch-stone of pure and undefiled Love, aim at nothing but our Dishonour. Ingratitude is a Crime I abhor; but as you are a Stranger to me, I cannot, without the greatest Incivility, but return you my Obligations I owe you for the Honour you have done me, in making me a tender of your Service, which I can no otherwise requite, than by my Wishes for your prosperous continuance on Earth.* Mats being ended, at the close of these Words, *Alfemero* rose up, and lifting *Beatrice* up from kneeling, he excused himself for so doing with a genteel Air, and thus replied; "*My Lady, I am not ignorant your Name is Beatrice Joana, Daughter of Don Diego Vermandero, Governor of the Castle of this City; and this Reflection, as I am yet a Stranger to you, makes me amazed you should seduce yourself, by drawing wrong Conclusions from my Words to you; however, the Innocency of my Intentions, and my unspotted Love is a Consideration that entirely makes me easy. And since, my Dear Charmer, you banish me from having a Seat in your fair Bosom; suffer me to enjoy one in your Coach, and be at Liberty to accompany you home to your Father's Castle.*

If *Alfemero's* Frankness had before surprized *Beatrice*, this last Declaration entirely astonished him; she imputes his gay Presumption to her own Frankness and free Words; this Reflection makes her repent her Error, which she strives to palliate by the following Reply; *Sir, when I can form any tolerable Veracity in your Words, I shall be ready to ask Pardon for my Crime, in making an estimate of you, by the Counterpoise of other Mens Ways. If I have done Wrong to your Merit, you have Liberty to make me give you some Return of Retaliation, by bearing me Company to my Father's Castle; tho' such a Piece of Condescension is against the Custom of Alicant. This Civility in Beatrice fill'd Alfemero's Breast with Extacies, and he could entertain no Thoughts but with rapturous Emotions of Love; he thanks the Charmer of his Soul for the favour she does him, and kissing ten thousand times her snowy Hand he takes her by the Arm, and conducts her to the Coach; their Passage to the Castle is one continued Scene of amorous Dalliance, and passionate*

sionate Vows, especially on *Alfemero's* side. He eyes *Beatrice* with Joy, and darts a thousand Glances, which speak but too much, how much his Soul burns with Love. Upon their Arrival at the Castle, *Diego*, the Lady's Father, receives *Alfemero*, his unknown Guest, with Marks of Honour and Distinction, and during his Stay, entertains him in the most agreeable Manner he can, by shewing him all the Rarities and Curiosities of his Castle; *Alfemero* hath the Satisfaction to be in Company with, and kifs *Beatrice*, but not to open the Sincerity of his Vows, the only Thing he wanted: In fine, he is obliged to return to his Lodging without effecting any thing of the Business he designed with his beloved *Beatrice*, after a nice Distinction of Compliments mutually paid by all Parties at withdrawing. We will leave for a while *Alfemero* and *Beatrice*, each to themselves, (the one ruminating on his Adventures, and the other full of the soft Words she had heard) to speak of another Person, who, in the Sequel, will make a considerable Figure by way of Rival,

There dwelt in *Allicant* one *Piracquo* a Gentleman of a plentiful Fortune, and descended from one of the best Families in that City; his Politeness and civiliz'd Behaviour procured him the Honour and Respect of the most eminent Personages. And his large Estate made the Parents of the finest and fairest Ladies both in the City and Country court his Alliance. In a Word, he was address'd to from every Side, but no one touch'd his Soul with so powerful Affection, as *Beatrice* above named: Her Beauty, in his Sentiments, surpass'd all the rest, and when he gaz'd upon her, he esteem'd it impossible not to admire her; fired with this Thought, he kept her continually in his Thoughts; 'till, in the Conclusion, the Sentiments he had entertain'd of her Beauty, sunk into his Soul, and made him resolve either to gain her for his Wife, or renounce being the Husband of any other Woman. With this View he makes frequent visits to *Beatrice*. *Vermandero*, her Father, knowing his personal Worth, and the fine Estate he was Possessor of, receives him with Gladness; he thinks himself honoured by his Presence, and esteems his Daughter happy in having such a Gentleman to address her. *Piracquo* finds his way agreeable; *Vermandero* is his Friend, and all things, to outward Probability, seem favourable to his Suit; but he is frustrated at last, in the main Article; *Beatrice* receives his ardent Vows, not with a reciprocal Flame,
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she eyes him with Indifference; but is so artful as not to let her Parents draw any uneasy Conclusions from her cool Behaviour. This reserved Temper of *Beatrice* is so far from giving any Discontent to *Piracquo*, that *Vermandero's* Kindness to him, and the Hopes of her Compliance at length, flatter him with Notions that redouble his Ardor; accordingly he uses greater Resolution and Importunity in his Addresses; he vows, swears, and protests, that he is her Slave, and she shall be his Mistress; but these Attempts are vain. *Beatrice* is insurmountable, and *Alfemero* the Man designed to lodge in her Arms, as will be seen in the Sequel.

Alfemero, all this Time from the Sight of his Charmer, could not stifle his Concern; but his Love invented ten thousand Ways to make it self further known to *Beatrice*. *Vermandero*, in the Interim, came to find out his Affection for his Daughter, and that *Piracquo* was the last in her Esteem. This was an insupportable Grief to him, as he reflected *Alfemero* was far behind him in the Acquisitions of Fortune. Beside, he had, in Effect, given *Piracquo* his Consent, and promised him his Daughter. This Consideration actuated him with a Desire to frustrate *Alfemero's* Expectation and prevent his Addresses. To this End, he leaves the Government of his Castle to his Son, takes *Beatrice* into his Coach, and withdraws to *Briamata* a fine Country Seat of his not far from *Alicant*, designing to consummate the Nuptials between her and *Piracquo*. But this Departure is not so secretly made, but *Alfemero* hears of it: He is Confounded at the News, but is ignorant of the Cause of its Suddenness; he cannot condemn her of Ungenerosity when he considers the short Familiarity he has had with her; however, he reflects, that as he had no Intimation of her going into the Country, he cannot, with any Probability, suppose her Love any Way inclined to him. These Considerations fill his Mind with Doubts, and he is at a Stand, either what to think, or act; he imagines, if he rides to *Briamata*, the Country Seat, *Vermandero* will blame his Presumption; if he continues any longer at *Alicant*, his Charmer will be affronted, and take it ill; perplexed between these two different Ways, he, at length, concludes upon a Method he thinks will extricate him out of his Difficulties, which is to write to her; accordingly having provided himself with

A Messenger he could confide in, he sends her the following Epistle :

My FAIR,

WHILE Alicant was Witness of my Charmer's Presence, my Life was a less Consideration to me than the Sight of your transporting Face. I have ten thousand Times blest that propitious Wind that blew contrary, and stop't my intended Voyage to Malta, in order to make me your Adorer, and you my Goddess. Know, my Lady, my Thoughts are so full of you, and the Love I bear you so sacred, that no Female in the World can win my Affection to abandon you, in whom, and through whom my sole Happiness and Felicity rises or falls. But oh, can I entertain any Sentiments of Comfort to myself, when the Object of my Soul hath not only withdrawn herself from me ; but, what cuts my Heart in a thousand Pieces, left Alicant, because of me. Ah, my fair Creature, If I am doomed to this Misery ; know, I have no other Consolation left, than the Hope of finding a Period of my Misfortunes, by as quick a Death, as the Suddeness of your leaving me.

ALSEMERO.

Beatrice, at the Receipt of this Epistle, shewed vast Emotions of Joy ; from the Contents, she drew a plain Conclusion, that *Alsemero's* Love was too generous and frank to distrust it. This Consideration inspires her with Sentiments she never entertained before, and which favour her Lover's Suit. In fine, she thinks it an act of Civility to answer him, and accordingly sends him the following.

S I R,

I Have not Reason sufficient yet to make me believe a Woman of my Degree can have Attraction enough to inspire Gentlemen like you, with such passionate Vows as your Epistle plainly tells. You mention, that your Felicity rises or falls, according to the Favour I shew you ; but this, I presume, is the Result of your Gallantry, rather than real Love. Your saying I have withdrawn myself from Alicant, is a Thing very true ; but that I left it for you is

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not so; my Father is the Cause of my being where I am; but Sir, let me tell you, if I cannot be kind, I will never shew myself cruel.

BEATRICE JOANA.

Alsemero finds no Manner of Consolation in this Letter, the Lines of it, he fancies, full of Unkindness, but attributes all to the Modesty of his Charmer; his Soul begins again to waver between Hope and Dispair, and he is vastly irresolute; he is bent this Moment to put a Period to his Amour; but the next Love reigns triumphant, and bids him push on his Suit with greater Boldness, for Conquest is not far off to crown his Labours; thus fired, he takes Pen, Ink, and Paper, and dictates the second Epistle.

MADAM,

I Cannot think the Ardor of my Soul is warmed by so poor a Flame, as not to convince you that my All is yours. But if the most tender and endearing Vows in the World, cannot perswade you to a Belief of my sincere and inviolable Affection; Oh! then let me wish you could convey yourself into the Middle of my Heart, where you could not but be an impartial Witness of my most consummate Love, which exceeds all that Heaven and Earth can boast. But why should I aim at Impossibilities? my Hopes are vain, and *Alsemero* is doomed to be the most wretched Man living. From this Moment I will sacrifice myself to Despair and the Love of you, tho' I am sure never to obtain you. If I live, it shall be to remain a Monument of your Displeasure; but if I die, it shall be, to give the World a Testimonial, I ended my Days for one of the finest Women on Earth.

ALSEMERO.

This Letter brings its own Confirmation along with it; *Alsemero's* Love is now no longer a Stranger to the Heart of *Beatrice*; she begins to set the Idea of her Person in a fairer point of Light than ever. *Briamata*, and all the rural Scenes about it, prove no longer pleasing and entertaining; for *Alicant* and her Lover engross all the Faculties of her Soul. *Vermandero* and *Piracquo* attack her on every side with Importunities to give her Consent, but all is ineffectual;

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she judges it but reasonable *Alsemero* should be acquainted in the Situation she is in, in order, that he may interpose, and gain over her Father, by some effectual Step or other, to favour his own Pretensions. With this View she sends him the following Letter :

S I R,

IF there is no Treason in the frank Declaration of a Woman's Heart, I dare presume to say you are the Gentleman, of all Men living, whom I affect. The ardent and passionate Vows in your Letters, the Sincerity you profess, and the Hope of the Fidelity I repose in you, bear down the Passions of my Soul in your Favour, and *Alsemero* is the Person, Monarch of my Heart. Notwithstanding this open Candour of my Bosom, I must, from several Motives, enjoin you to a profound Secrecy in this Affair; and entreat you, with all possible Expedition, privately to come hither, 'till when, I shall never enjoy one Moment of true Contentment or Satisfaction. In the Interim, so order the Indulgence I have given you, that the Lady who loves you, may be convinced you are a Gentleman of Prudence and Generosity.

BEATRICE JOANA.

Alsemero took and kissed this transporting Letter a thousand times, and wished as many Blessings upon the snowy Hand that indicted it. The Indies which he had twice beheld, came far short of the inestimable Treasure he conceived in his beloved Lady; her Beauty, from this happy Conjecture, appears in an irresistible Point admirable: His Voyage to *Malta* is set aside, and the Wind, though it blew favourably, hath ten thousand Deprecations thrown upon it; he counterfeits himself indisposed, fetches back his Trunks, and resolves *Alicant* shall be his Place of Residence, from whence he sends his Messengers to *Briamata* in the Morning, to signify to her he will present himself before her at Eleven o'Clock that Night. This News is ravishing to *Beatrice*, who provides for his Reception. *Alsemero* makes the Night the Witness to his Journey; and *Diaphanta*, *Beatrice*'s Waiting-Woman, is order'd to wait his Arrival at a Postern Door, answering to a Garden. *Alsemero* appears: *Diaphanta* conducting him through a private Gallery, leads him into the Chamber of *Beatrice*, who

who received him with Emotions of Joy, great Civility, and a bewitching Air. Their Interview is begun with a thousand passionate Kisses, and Testimonies of a sincere Affection to each other, and then seconded by *Beatrice* with a sensible Detail of *Piracquo's* importunate Addresses to her; and her Father's rigorous constraining her to marry him, for which End he was then in the House; she tells him, she neither can, nor will ever give her Consent to such a Thing, and he is the Person who reigns in her Breast, and usurps her Soul; concluding she would live and die with him alone; but there could be found no possibility of compleating her Wishes to that End, 'till *Piracquo* was conveyed out of the Society of the living.

Alfemero is not so unpenetrating, as not to find the Motive of this sudden and violent Proceeding in *Beatrice*; her extraordinary Love dictates this to her Mind, and her Disdain to be compelled into a Marriage she dislikes, concludes her upon getting rid of *Piracquo*. *Alfemero* considering the Fervency and Impetuosity of her Love for him, and giving Way hourly to the Force of her beauteous Charms, thinks the only way in the World to please her, is to proffer his Service to her; accordingly he tells her he will send *Piracquo* a Challenge to fight him; concluding, as she is the sole Object of his Desires, he is ready to dye a thousand Times, if it were possible, to obey her Commands. *Beatrice* receives this fresh Testimony of *Alfemero's* Love with an uncommon Gaiety; she thanks him for his Generosity, but is apprehensive of some Danger he might incur in so nice an Affair; she begs him, by the Sacredness of their mutual Wishes, in no wise to engage in so dreadful a Business, but submit it to her own Conduct, acquainting him, she thinks herself in a Capacity to win her Father over to her Remonstrances, to the entire neglect of *Piracquo*, and the full Enjoyment of the Happiness each of them longs after; concluding, that tho' his Presence is dearer to her than the Joy of Heaven; yet, to arrive to the Satisfaction of their Wishes, she importunes him for a short Time, to return to *Valentia*, assuring him, they would gain considerably more Advantage by Delay; than by the Force of any rash Attempt. In fine, *Alfemero*, influenced by her Council, after a passionate Farewel for the Time, comes back to *Alicant*, and having prepared himself for his Journey, returns to *Valentia*, where we will

leave him a While to introduce some other Passages, which make an essential Part of the Sequel.

The Interview between *Alfemero* and his beloved *Beatrice*, was not carried on with so much Secrecy, but *Vermandero*, the Father, received Intelligence of it by some Person who had accidentally overheard them; *Vermandero* is confounded at the News, but says not a Word of it to *Piracquo*, with whom he continues his wonted Familiarity and Communication. *Piracquo* persists in his Importunities, and *Vermandero* tells him positively, that in a little Time, he shall be sole Possessor of his Daughter's Affections, either by his Entreaties or Menaces. In fine, this Interlude of Love, and the Rivalship of *Alfemero*, becomes the Talk and Chat of several eminent Persons of *Alicant*, who, out of a Piece of Generosity to *Piracquo*, signify the whole Affair to Don *Thomaso* his younger Brother. *Thomaso* startled at the Relation, and supposing his Brother an entire Stranger to the secret Proceedings between *Beatrice* and *Alfemero*, and willing to convince him of his Error, and remind him of the Dishonour he was likely to incur, sent to *Briamata* the following Epistle :

DEAR BROTHER,

AS I always ought to prefer the Obligations I owe a Brother, to those of myself; I am convinced of your Concurrence, when I tell you, that Lovers, dazzled with an imaginary View of Charms in the Faces and Persons of their Mistresses, do not see with the Eyes of other Men. You will be amazed, perhaps, at my acquainting you, from the Report of Persons of unquestionable Veracity, that *Beatrice Joana* is both unworthy of your Love; and never designed to crown the Suit you have begun to her, having submitted herself and her Charms to the more potent Addresses of *Alfemero* your Rival. To be the Harbinger of this News, which must affect you, I have had many struggles in my Heart; but the Duty I owe you as my Brother, hath induced me to send you this Letter, in which I exhort you not to attempt an Impossibility; but while your Error is at the shortest, endeavour to rectify it, by withdrawing your Love in time from one who deserves not the thousand Part of the Homage you have already paid her. I presume, as you are my Brother, or as you have Gene-
rosity

rosity enough in your Soul, you will encline to the Remonstrance I have made you.

THOMASO PIRACQUO.

Piracquo is pleased at the officious Duty of his Brother ; but his Letter is insufficient to banish out of his Soul, the extravagant Love that had taken Possession of it. He solicits *Beatrice* with a Warmth of Affection, that plainly told he had no Sentiments of desisting from pushing on his Aims of obtaining her ; but, on the contrary, that he was resolved to try every Method rather than be foiled in his Pretensions. This Behaviour of his allarmed *Beatrice*, who was now confirmed in her Resolution of taking him out of the Way, to make Room for *Alsemero*, the Possession of whom she saw she was never likely to obtain, without putting the Death of *Piracquo* in Execution. With this View she racks her Head with a thousand Devices to perform her Business in the most advantageous Manner, and she is not long before she finds one agreeable to her own Desires. In the Garrison belonging to the Castle, there was a young Gentleman named *Antonio de Flores*, whom, she knew, entertained Sentiments of Love for her, and would, upon her bare Importunity, proffer his Service to kill *Piracquo*. Upon her Arrival at *Alicant* with her Father and *Piracquo* (which was immediately after *Alsemero's* return to *Valentia*) boiling with her furious and terrible Design, she sends for *Antonio*, and with great Insinuation and Artifice, and not without a Protestation of Kindness for him, provided he gives Obedience to what she was going to acquaint him, opens the Purport of her Business. *Antonio*, having preserved a Love of long standing for *Beatrice*, is ravished with her Words ; her promises of Affection entirely subdue him, and the Sight of her Charms so transport him in the End ; that, without any manner of Hesitation, he gives her his Word and Honour to execute her Command ; immediately the Plot is advised upon. *Antonio*, upon *Piracquo's* coming to the Castle, ingratiates himself with him, and mixes in his Company ; it fell out, as they were in Discourse together, *Piracquo* enlarged much on the Beauty and strong Fortifications of the Castle, upon which *Antonio* answered, that the only Ornaments about it, were the Casemates filled with good Ordinance to scour the Ditches. *Piracquo* hearing this, ask'd him to favour him
with

with a view of them. *Antonio*, glad of his Success, tells him he is ready to oblige him in that or any other Favour after Dinner, the bell then ringing for that end; *Piracquo* thanks him for the Honour he does him, accepts the Invitation, and both having concluded to meet at the Time appointed, leave one another for the Present. During the Time of Dinner, *Antonio* goes into the East *Casemate*, where he hides a naked Sword and poyard; but after Dinner, *Piracquo* comes and reminds him of his Promise. Upon this, *Antonio* shews himself his Conductor, and leads him from the Walls to the *Ravelius*, Sconces, and Bulwarks, and from thence to the Ditches, and so outwards, to the *Casemates*; three of which *Piracquo* having taken a very particular View, *Antonio* carries him to the Fourth, where he design'd to put his Plot in Execution: To put a more specious Colour over his Designs, he takes the Rapier from his Side at the Entrance of the Descent, telling him the Passage to it is very narrow and difficult. *Piracquo*, upon this, leaves also his Sword behind him, and apprehending no Manner of Danger, follows *Antonio*, who conducting him through the Vault of the *Casemates*, opens the Door with some Force backwards, with intent to conceal the Weapons he had hid there, he pretends to look through a Port-hole, and amuses *Piracquo* with some Tale or other to make him do the like. *Piracquo* readily consents, and casts his Eyes thro' the Port-hole; but while he continued stooping, *Antonio* gets the Sword he had concealed, and with a furious Push, stabb'd him through the Back, and redoubling his Stroke, never ceased, till he had laid him dead upon the Spot; after which he took and buried him under the Ruins of an old Wall, out of which the *Casemate* had been erected. *Antonio* had no sooner perpetrated this horrid Piece of Villainy, but he goes and acquaints *Beatrice* with it, whose Emotions of Joy, at so glad an Accident, were too manifest; to reward *Antonio*, in some sort, for his Obedience and Fidelity, she clasps him in her Arms, and buries him in a thousand Kisses. They concert Measures how to make *Piracquo's* Absence seem plausible, and quash any Reports that might be spread about him. With this View, *Beatrice* advices *Antonio* to divulge it secretly and artfully, that *Piracquo* was seen to go out of the Gates of the Castle, thence into the City, and afterwards to take a Boat and go out to Sea for

for the Benefit of the Air. But this Stratagem is attended with fatal Consequences, as the Sequel will shew.

Piracquo had not been missing long, before the Castle and City was full of his Absence; *Antonio's* Schemes had the desired Effect, and all Persons Tongues were fluent of the Reports he had industriously spread; old *Vermandero* is confounded, and unable either what to say or act: *Piracquo's* Brother and Friends are in the last Extremity, every Moment they expect his Return, and every Hour think they shall be blest with his Presence; they make extraordinary Search after him in every Corner of the City, and send Messengers both by Sea and Land, to find him out. *Beatrice* triumphs within her Bosom, but makes an outward Shew of vast Concern and Affliction; her Father protests, that next to himself, of all Men living, he loves *Piracquo*, and makes all imaginable Endeavours to find him out. In fine, all those Persons who had the Honour of *Piracquo's* Acquaintance and Conversation, mourned his Absence with a most sensible Sorrow, and a Flood of Tears.

During this general Scene of Lamentation and Enquiry, *Beatrice* sends private Word to *Alfemero* of the late barbarous Transaction, but shades the Narration of it over with such Terms, as entirely excused her from having made any Step in the Affair; she bids him leave *Valentia*, and come to *Alicant*: The Message pleases *Alfemero*, he stands astonish'd at this Account, and to humour his charming *Beatrice*, believes the major Part of what he had heard. The Idea he presented of her ravishing Face, quite effaces all his Considerations of *Piracquo*; he prepares for *Alicant*, but to make his Journey the more acceptable, sends some of his best and most trusty Relations to pave his Way with *Vermandero*, and make an honourable Demand of his Daughter in Marriage, resolving to be soon after them, and crown his Pretensions by his personal Interviews. In fine, after a Series of several Conferences, and other Decorums necessary to unite the two Lovers, *Alfemero* hath the Satisfaction to gain *Vermandero's* Consent, the Nuptials are fixed upon, and at length solemnized in *Alicant* with prodigious Magnificence and Pomp.

One would imagine now, that *Alfemero* and *Beatrice*, after the long Struggle to obtain their Wishes, and the perfect Acquisition of what each of them prized as the most valuable Thing in the World, should have met with the most transporting Scene of uninterrupted Joy and mutual Pleasure.

Pleasure. But Fate had otherwise determined. *Alfemero*, like thousands of other fond Husbands, harbours, through an impetuous Passion for his new Wife, the Seeds of Jealousy in his Bosom; he cannot endure that his charming *Beatrice*, possessed of the finest Set of Features, of any Woman living, should be at Liberty to mix in Conversation with any Person but himself; he eyes her Conduct with a Narrowness, that gives her too just Ground of Suspicion. She is fair and handsome, and whenever she views herself in her Glass, she has not the Courage to think herself worthy of the Dishonour *Alfemero* does her; she reflects and thinks again, and tossing herself from one tumultuous Thought to another, gradually sinks into Disdain of her Husband's Ways, whom she, at length, looks upon as an Impostor and a Deceiver; she frets herself to a thousand Pieces, and not brooking the disingenuous Treatment of *Alfemero*, goes to *Vermandero* her Father, to whom she exposes the unhappy Situation she is in. Maugre this Representation, *Alfemero* continues to watch her more closely, and even to set Spies over every trifling Circumstance of her Conduct; so great is his Jealousy, and his Suspicions of her unchaste Behaviour in Secret. *Beatrice*, upon this, applies again to *Vermandero* to redress her Wrongs, who discovers, upon his Daughter's pathetic Complaints, great Signs of manly Prudence; but all Endeavours to quiet the ill Situation between the new married Couple are uneffectual; *Alfemero* gives a deaf Ear to his Father-in-law's Remonstrances, and thinking his Dishonour lies at Stake in such officious Enquires into his Conduct, takes, to secure his Fears, his Wife in a Coach, and carries her from *Alicant* to *Valentia*. This Procedure is a Vexation to the Father; and the Daughter enraged at it, no longer thinks upon her Husband with Sentiments of Affection. In fine, *Vermandero*, like an affectionate Father, in two or three Days after their Displeasure, sends *Antonio* (whom we have had Occasion to observe above) with a Letter to *Alfemero*, to know how Matters subsisted between him and his Spouse. *Antonio*, glad of this Opportunity, goes to *Valentia*, and finding *Alfemero* abroad, gives the Epistle to *Beatrice*, whom he meets with alone; this was too fine an Opportunity, for a Man of *Antonio*'s eager Love, to let slip; he improves the Advantage favouring his Passion, kisses his charming Dame ten thousand Times, extorts from her all the Circumstances of her Husband's base Conduct to her;

in short, *Beatrice*, reflecting upon the Obligations she owes *Antonio*, from this Moment, casts herself into his Arms, and tells him, she is his for ever. During these Transactions, *Alfemero* returns, receives *Vermandero's* Letter, and puts on a pretended Air of Gladness; he welcomes *Antonio*; and after a little Time, writes an Answer, and gives it him. *Antonio* pays his Civility with Thanks, and returns; but his Back is hardly turned one Moment, before a Waiting-Woman of *Beatrice*, corrupted by *Alfemero*, tells her Master the whole Interview between *Antonio* and his Wife; she enumerates all the passionate Kisses that past between, and were mutually given each other; and exaggerates the Love Scene to an intollerable Height. *Alfemero* is beyond himself at the astonishing Words he hears, he vows Revenge, cost him what it will, and in a Rage, taking his Sword into his Hand, flies into his Wife's Chamber, to whom he thus addresses himself. *Madam*, said he, *tell me, by the Peril of your Life, what was the Familiarity past between you and Antonio.* *Beatrice* surprized, answers him, that with the most solemn Protestations, she and *Antonio* have committed nothing against the Rules of the strictest Honour; whence then, replies he, proceeds this Familiarity? Acquaint me, or by the Vengeance with which I labour, I'll send your Soul to another World upon the Point of my Sword. Overcome at the terrible Menace. Ah my *Alfemero*! and is it thus you treat me? *Know then, that the Familiarity I am accused of to you, is owing to the Obligations I have to Antonio; 'twas he, who, at my Desire, murdered Piracquo, in order to make Way for your Possession of my Love.* After this, she tells every Circumstance about *Piracquo's* Death, and begs him to conceal all, as *Antonio's* and her Life depended upon it. *Alfemero* is surprized, he reflects, and thinks if his Wife can imbrue her Hands in Murther, she will also dare to dishonour his Bed; but, won at last, by the many Vows she made him of her future Chastity, he pardons her. But this Indulgence is of no Force; *Antonio* and she maintain the same kind Interviews; their prostituted Loves are acted with Thoughts of Impunity, and the greatest Freedom; the Woman who revealed the first Intrigue, now tells *Alfemero* the Second, who boils with Choller, and threatens nothing but Revenge; he orders the Woman to mind the very Hour of *Antonio's* coming; and then pretending a Journey into the Country, locks himself up in his Study,

with great Secrecy, adjoining to his Bed-chamber, with a Sword, and a Case of charged Pistols. *Beatrice* supposing her Husband gone a real Journey, receives *Antonio* with Emotions of Love and Joy, nor is he less backward to demonstrate his Affections. *Beatrice* enumerates all the Barbarity of her Husband, which *Antonio* threatens to repay with Indignation. *Alfemero*, with wonderful Secrecy overhears all, he storms privately within his own Breast, but Rage, not permitting him to be any longer an Hearer of the Villainy and Dishonour done him, he rushes in, Sword and Pistols in his Hand, and finding them on his Bed in the very act of their adulterous Pleasures, discharges his Pistols first, and then with his Sword lays both of them dead on the Spot. *Alfemero*, having committed this miserable Scene of Death, leaves the Instruments of his Wrath, bloody as they were, upon the Table, and hastes to the criminal Judge, to whom he reveals the Action he had done, but says not a Word of the Murther of *Piracquo*. The Judge startled at the uncommon Accident, returns with *Alfemero* to his House, and finds every Thing exactly correspond with what he had told him. From this Moment, all about rings with the Relation of these Facts; *Valentia* becomes a Mourner, and *Alicant* no less sorrowful; but *Vermandero's* extreme Grief quite exceeds the Bounds of Reason. In the Interim, the Judge commits *Alfemero* Prisoner to a Chamber in the House, and puts the Waiting-Woman upon her Examination, who makes an ample Testification of every Thing that had passed between her Mistress and *Antonio*. In fine, the Judge finding all Circumstances agree, acquits *Alfemero*, and discharges him.

This Affair being over, we will now return to *Thomaso*, the injured *Piracquo's* Brother, who from a long and judicious Reflection on the Events that had happen'd to *Beatrice* and *Alfemero*, and the Methods used Prior to their Marriage, could not be induced to think, but one or both of them had been necessary to, or instrumental in the Murther of his Brother; this Consideration convincing him by Degrees of the Reality of his Sentiments, warmed him with a noble and brave Resolution; he thought it unbecoming the Character of a Gentleman to let go unpunished his Brother's Dishonour; to which End, thinking himself ordained of old Time to punish *Alfemero*, as he had done *Beatrice*, he wrote him a Challenge to this Effect:

S I R,

S I R,

I Have too much Reason on my Side, not to conclude you and Beatrice guilty of the Death of my Brother, who was to me the dearest Man under Heaven. Was I tamely to forbear a Satisfaction, which the Enormity of your Crime merits, this World would then, and the Character of a Gentleman I bear, be undeserving of me. To suffer Death for his Sake, is what I covet; and if one Friend thinks himself in Honour bound to repay the Obligation of his Fellow Friend; certainly, the Consideration lying between two Brothers, is of far greater Importance. Wherefore I challenge you to meet me, without Seconds, at Glisscran-Hill, To-morrow at Five in the Morning, to answer your Dishonour and Inhumanity.

THOMASO PIRACQUO.

Alfemero receives the Writing, and accepts the Conditions; *Piracquo's* Resolution amazes him; he reflects his Quarrel is founded upon good Grounds; namely, the Vindication of his Brother's dishonourable Death; this Thought abates his wonted Ardor, and pushes him on to a base Purpose. In fine, they meet, but *Alfemero* privately conveys a pair of Pistols in his Pockets, and upon each, drawing his Sword, under colour of justifying himself with Words, engages *Piracquo* to come near and hear his Defence, when discharging his Pistols at him, he laid him dead upon the Spot. *Piracquo's* Surgeon being an Eye-witness of this Piece of Cowardice, immediately hastens to *Alicant*, and reports it to the criminal Judge, who sends to apprehend the Murtherer, but *Alfemero* flies. He flies indeed, but has the Mortification in a little Time, to see his Horse stumble with him, and himself to break his Arm. Weakened by this Accident, he is unable to proceed so as to elude his Pursuers, for four Persons on Horseback presently Gallop up to him. *Alfemero* scorns to surrender, attacks, and wounds two of them in his Defence, but his Sword breaking in his Hand, reduces him to a Necessity of being taken, they carry him to *Alicant* before the Senate, assembled on purpose; he makes an open Confession, and is adjudg'd to be beheaded. On the Scaffold, he acquaints the Spectators with the Murther of *Alfonso Piracquo*; upon which, his Body is taken out of the East Casemate of the Castle, and buried.

buried. *Alfemero's* Head is cut off, and *Antonio's* and *Beatrice's* Bodies removed out of the Churches they were interred in, burnt, and their Ashes thrown into the Air.

This was the Catastrophe of *Alfemero*, who, by an Impetuosity, too fatal in Love, pushing him on to the Extreme, which made the Period of his Life very dishonourable; the Bravery he shewed in the Encounter he had with the four Horsemen, cannot be sufficiently admired, when we reflect on the Accident of his Swords breaking; but his Destiny was approaching, and the Courage he was Master of, was not able to secure him from the Punishment due to his ignoble Treatment of *Piracquo*. This very Act stained his former Conduct; and tho' *Alarche* and *Mamora* had sufficiently testified his extraordinary Valour; yet, *Piracquo's* Death, cast a Blemish upon his Virtue, of too deep a Die to be ever washed out. *Beatrice*, his Mistress, is an Example to all Fathers, not to match their Daughters to Persons they cannot Love; for had *Vermandero* been guided by a Motive of Affection for his Daughter, he had first consulted the Sentiments she herself entertained, and not submitted himself to an abject Consideration of *Piracquo's* Wealth and Estate; for Money is seldom an Essential to real Happiness; for if mutual Wishes, and a reciprocal Ardor, blow not up the *Hymenean* Fire, no other Consideration in the World is able to do it.



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The HISTORY of
Alibius and Merilla.

N U M B. V.



I N the Parish of *Sprear*, about fifteen Miles from the beautiful and noble City of *Brescia*, (in the *Venetian Territories*) there lived a poor Countryman, named *Alibius*, who could boast of no other Wealth left him by his deceased Parents, but that he was a Man of a comely Stature, and just Proportion; and that they had left an honest Character behind them. If his Virtues had answer'd their's, his Poverty had never been so pernicious and fatal an Enemy to him, as at once to destroy his Reputation and Life: Or had not the Imperfections of his Soul stained those of his Body, his History might have been buried with him; but as his Actions exceeded the bounds of Humanity, and since he imbrued his Hands in innocent Blood, 'tis just Mankind should know it, in order to abhor and detest such bloody Actions,

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and

and learn to dread the Crime by knowing the Punishment of so notorious and wicked an Offendor.

This *Alibius*, as soon as he had attained the Age of Five and twenty Years, married an honest Farmer's Daughter of the Parish of *Sprear*, named *Merilla*, a Person to whom Fortune had been no ways indulgent; she had but a small share of Wit, little Fortune, and less Beauty: She was not, indeed, so poor as to be despicable, nor so ugly but an honest Man might have been contented with her: For had the Husband's Care and Industry answered the Wife's Frugality; or had not his lustful Eye stray'd beyond the Marriage Vow, this Marriage might have proved as happy as it did miserable to each of them.

But *Alibius's* Thoughts were above his Birth, Rank, and Fortune; and he had not been long married, before his Folly and Vanity had consumed the greatest Part of the little Fortune he had with his Wife; and as Work was always his Aversion, he studied all the Ways he could to supply himself with Money at any Rate, nor stuck at any Thing to accomplish his Desires were they ever so lewd or Infamous. Mean while, his honest Wife plainly perceived, that her Labour could not supply his Expences, and that all her Care and Industry fell short to maintain him in his Extravagancy. The good Woman observing the Course he took, by fair Words and Persuasions endeavoured to reclaim him; but alas! in vain; for he, harden'd in his Faults, rejected her Advice, reviling her with bad Words; and, prompted by his own base Inclinations, daily abused her; so that she had not one comfortable Hour; and this was the first Distaste between them; and as the Beginning was bad, the Sequel was fatal.

There is no Rock so fatal, or on which so many split, as that of keeping bad Company; (for such *Alibius* kept;) their Conversation is infectious, and it often makes us justify Vice for Virtue. It takes off the Husband's Love to his Wife, and makes the Wife think despicable of the Husband. It is the greatest Bane to the Matrimonial State; for can a Man, who solemnly in the Presence of his Creator promises to cherish the Wife of his Bosom; can that Man fling her from him, and habituate himself to vicious Company? A wretched Exchange! when we act so contrary to the Laws of Reason and Nature, when we break our Vows to God, and enter into an immediate League and Covenant with the Devil.

Poor

Poor *Merilla* perplex'd to see the Course her Husband took, that it walted his Estate, lost him his Friends, and ruined his Reputation, thought it her Duty to desire some of his intimate Acquaintance to talk to him about it, and to endeavour to persuade him to leave his irregular and wicked Courses. But *Alibius*, whose Soul was thoroughly contaminated, was so far from relishing the kind Advice of his Friend, that he not only despised it, but laughed at the Person who gave it. And it being not so secretly or discreetly managed, but that *Alibius* came to know it was by his Wife's Desire that his Friends reproved him, he took so great a Disgust to find that his Follies were revealed by her, that after a most severe Check, he in the Heat of his Revenge, forsakes her Bed for some Months; but such was her Affection still for him, that she was scarce to be comforted by any Means at all, but spent her Time in continual Sorrow. The Motives of his third Distaste to his Wife, was groundd upon her Barrenness, as if it was in her Power to give him a Child, when the Divine Pleasure was averse to it, and not considering that Children often prove a Curse instead of a Blessing. He, however, in a Clownish Sullenness, would often tell her, *That when she had a Child he would be a good Husband, but not before*; nay, so great was his Impiety, that he would often declare, that his Wife was the Cause of his Poverty; and if she would give him no Child, God would never prosper him.

'Tis certain, all Women by Instinct, naturally desire Children, and it is a great Affliction, if not a Curse to them if they have none. But these unjust Reproaches of *Alibius* justly afflicted his Wife, who sends her Tears to Earth, and her Prayers to Heaven, that the Omnipotent Being would bless her with a Child. And Prayers sent from a pure Heart, and address'd to a merciful God, seldom fail of obtaining their Request, nor did *Merilla's*; for Heaven seeing his Hypocrisy, and knowing her religious Zeal, out of its inestimable Mercy, did grant her Petition, and him his Desire; and blest her with a young Daughter, whom they named *Emelia*.

But from hence, proceeded another Reason of Distaste to his Wife; for his Prodigality still remaining, and his Wife's Sterility being taken away, he who was before so desirous of a Child, now thinks this one too many; because, as he pretended, he could not endure the Crying and Noise of it; But that was unnatural end ridiculous in itself. As the Child

grew up he murmur'd more, observing the tender Mother substract from his Prodigality to maintain *Emilia*; and this so incensed him, that he declared his Child, whom he pretended would be the Cause of his Joy and Prosperity, is now that of his Grief. Thus poor *Merilla* to her unspeakable Sorrow, perceived his uncharitable and malicious Speeches directed to her, for *Emilia's* Sake; but God sent the Daughter to revenge the Injuries and Wrongs that her Father intended to her indulgent Mother.

His next Distaste against his Wife proceeded from his observing, that old Age grew upon her; and that she was more homely than when he first married her, as if Time and Age had not Power to wither the most consummate Charms and bloom of Beauty and Youth. As all his former Distastes to his Wife betray'd his Inclinations to Prodigality and Wickedness, so this last doth plainly discover his Addiction to Lust. 'Tis impossible for our Wives to seem deformed in our Eyes, except another seems fairer. 'Tis the Eye is the Door to the Heart in such Cases, and when Lust becomes a gnawing Vulture to the Heart, States have been over-thrown, and Kingdoms laid waste to please the carnal Appetites; and no Sin has been scrupled by some carnal minded Men to accomplish their Desires. For Love (or rather Lust) stops at nothing but Possession.

Alibius tempted by some Demon, and irritated by the foregoing Distastes conceived against his Wife, (who, poor Woman, thought herself secure in her Innocency,) resolved to leave *Merilla* and his Daughter, and go to Service to some Gentleman, in order to put a stop to his Extravagancy, and thereby to recover what he had lavishly spent. His Intention had been highly applauded, if the Integrity of his Heart had answer'd the Smoothness of his Speech; but we shall find the Reverse by the Remainder of this Story; for Words are not to be depended upon when proceeding from the Mouth of a treacherous and base Person, who like *Judas*, would betray with a Kiss.

He served several Gentlemen of Worth and Quality, and one of great Riches and Reputation, not above three short Miles from the City of *Brescia*, who being a Man of Hospitality, and a good Member of the Commonwealth, *Alibius*, (had he been a Person of Probity, or had he had the least Design to reform,) might have left Vice, and embraced the Charms of Virtue: *Alibius* delighted in carving well, to be decent in his Apparel; and, above all, to have an
oily

oily Tongue; to be affable and free in his Compliments, without any regard at all, either to reform the Vanity of his Ambition, or to controul his dissolute and debauch'd Opinions.

Having thus passed many Years abroad in Service, and seldom or never having seen *Sprear*, or visited his Wife or Daughter, and finding that Age began to make an Impression on him, and that Servants got little but a new Livery and a Bellyful, he resolved to leave *Sprear*, and to travel to *Venice*, hoping there to get an Employment under the Seignory, or at least in some of the Nobles Service; but recollecting the Weakness of his Purse, and the Uncertainty and Instability of Fortune, he form'd a Resolution to sojourn for some Time in *Brescia*, in order to repair and amend (if possible) his shatter'd Fortune.

Not long had he lived in this City, (Second to none but *Venice* itself for Antiquity, Beauty, and Wealth,) but his wandering Eye, already too much used to rove on new Ideas, made him forget his own Wife; and, desirous of Change, to wish her in another World, that he might have the more Liberty to gratify his brutal Appetite in this. And now the Devil got too great an Ascendant over him.

For while he staid in *Brescia*, it happen'd, that the Officer who carry'd the Silver Rod before the *Podesta*, or chief Magistrate of this City, died, and to that Office *Alibius* aspired; and through his Gravity, smooth Tongue, and fair Speeches, join'd with his making Interest to the *Podesta* and Senators, at last obtain'd it. A Place indeed more honourable than profitable, and yet worth at least one hundred Pounds *per Annum*, besides his Diet. This Preferment made *Alibius* so much elated, that he scorn'd his poor Wife, forgetting that she cherish'd him in the Midst of his Poverty; nor would he see *Sprear*, nor suffer her to visit *Brescia*; and the Devil being busy with him, he in hopes of a richer and fairer Wife, resolved to Poison poor *Merilla*, and what egg'd him on with more Violence, was a proud Conceit of himself on his Preferment.

Not long after, another Accident fell out highly pleasing to him. An honest Citizen of *Brescia* of his own Name, but no ways related to him died, (not without a strong Suspicion of being poison'd) leaving a rich Widow, named *Philatea*; and for the good Opinion he had conceived of *Alibius*, induced thereto by his Hypocritical Shew of Honesty and Piety, made him sole Executor.

Alibius

Alibius seeing *Philatea* young, rich, and fair, look'd on her with a wanton Eye, wishing his Wife in the Grave, and himself in *Philatea's* Bed. To obtain which, being fill'd with cruel and bloody Resolutions, he resolv'd to make *Merilla* a Visit at *Sprear*; and under Colour of Affection, making a sumptuous Entertainment, mingled Poison in those Dishes set apart for his Wife *Merilla*; but seeing it had not the desired Effect, he took Occasion to quarrel with her, and in the Presence of his Daughter *Emilia*, abused and beat her in a very inhuman Manner, and return'd to *Brescia*, still hoping the Poison might yet operate, and disperse itself in her Veins, and that shortly he should receive the welcome News of his Wife's Death.

In the mean Time, he laid close Siege to *Philatea's* Chastity, and with all the artful Insinuations of a flattering Tongue, with repeated Vows of Constancy and Sincerity, and with all the soft and tender Things he could say, at last he overcame her, and perswaded her to prostitute herself to his unlawful Pleasure, and not regarding her Reputation, or the Welfare of her Soul, consents to the delusive Pleasure. A Pleasure destructive often in the End: A bitter Sweet, and often attended with dismal Woe; and so it proved to them; for their lascivious Familiarity began to discover itself in a visible Manner, which *Philatea* perceiving, thought it high Time to provide for her own Safety, and so acquainted *Alibius* with her Pregnancy, and asked his Advice, whether she should marry with one of her Servants in order to preserve her Honour. Such alas! is the Depravity of human Nature, that one Crime produces another; and as she had wrong'd herself, was yet willing to deceive perhaps an honest Servant. But *Alibius* intending to keep all to himself, having got Possession, bids her be chearful, and assured her that he would take Care to provide a Place so private for her Reception that not a Soul shall be inform'd of it.

Alibius was before resolv'd to murder his innocent Wife, and this Complaint of *Philatea* set him all on fire; he now vows poor *Merilla* shall not live, provides himself with stronger Poison, and cover'd by the Obscurity of the Night, takes Horse, and rides directly to *Sprear*; but Providence seem'd to cross his Design, and to divert him from his bloody Purpose, by an Accident as strange as true; for about a Mile from *Brescia*, as he rode by the common Place of Execution, his Horse stumbled, and fell with him
directly

directly against it, and with the Fall *Alibius* put his Shoulder out of Joint: "An Omen surely from above to deter the designing Wretch from his horrid Enterprize; but his Covenant with Hell was so strong, that no Motives could divert his Intent; but full of his premeditated Purpose he pursues his Journey.

Arriving at his House at *Sprear*, he, contrary to his Expectation, finds his Daughter *Emilia* with her Mother (who by this Time had married a poor Countryman) the Sight of whom for that Time put a Stop to his Design of poisoning her Mother, fearing she had already suspected and discovered his Purpose, as indeed she had; for which Reason, he forbore to administer the dismal Potion.

Returning again to *Brescia*, he there meets with *Philatea's* repeated Complaints of her approaching Shame, and that now it was high Time to look out for a Husband to screen her. *Alibius*, on her repeated Tears and Complaints, resolves at any rate, or in any manner, to send his Wife into another World, but concealed his Purpose from the deluded, deceived, and debauched *Philatea*. A Wretch indeed he was, more Devil than Man, to imbrue his Hands in the Blood of his own Wife, whom the Laws of Men and Decrees of Heaven had joined to him. Nay, had he but ruminated on the Silver Wand he himself bore before the *Podesta*; had he considered that as an Emblem of Justice for scourging and punishing infamous Actions, surely he must have desisted. But what will not Lust prompt us to, or Revenge execute, if we are abandoned by the Supreme Being.

Perseverance in Virtue is amiable, but in Sin lamentable, and this was *Alibius's* Case. Harden'd in Vice, the deeper Root it got, and nothing but innocent Blood could appease the daring Wretch; he resolves to finish this mournful and bloody Tragedy so long desired, and so often attempted. At length the fatal Time approached, wherein harmless *Merilla* was to fall by the merciless Hand of her Husband.

Alibius having waited on the *Podesta* at Supper, took Horse just before the City Gates were shut, and having some of the strong Poison in his Pocket rode directly to *Sprear*; but the more secretly to act his Villainy, he masked and disguised himself, and before he got to his House, he ties his Horse to a Tree, and so knocks at the Door. Poor *Merilla* was in Bed and asleep with a little Girl named *Pomera*, Daughter of *Emilia*; and the innocent Wife be-
leiving

ceiving (as indeed it proved too true for her) that it was her Husband, sends the little Girl down without a Candle to open the Door: The Child opening the Door, lets one in, but whom she knows not, but by the small Light the Moon afforded, perceived he had a Mask on, and being afraid, retired to the Kitchen, and shut the Door fast after her: *Alibius* goes directly to his Wife's Chamber, and after some few Words had passed, forced her to take a Draught of the Poison he had brought; she using all her weak Strength to defend herself, and endeavouring to call for Help, but in vain, for he being devilishly resolved now to make sure Work, takes a Billet out of the Chimney, and without giving her the least Time to call to God for Mercy, he dispatched her in the Bed, and then made what Haste he could to leave the House.

Pomerea fearing what had happened, lights a Candle, and trembling goes up Stairs, where she views the sad Spectacle of her murdered Grandmother weltring in her Blood; shocked with the Sight, she makes most dismal Cries and Lamentations, and knows not what to do in this wretched Perplexity: During this Time, *Alibius* going for his Horse, finds nothing but the Halter; perplexed at this, he goes to the House of one *Bernardo*, a Companion of his formerly in all his Extravagances, and who he very well knew was capable of acting the greatest Villainy; and this Fellow he acquaints with the Loss of his Horse, desiring his Assistance to find him out, and as Fortune would have it, they found him grazing in a neighbouring Meadow. *Alibius*, after having given *Barnard* Gold, and enjoined him to Secrecy, hastens back to *Brescia*, where the better to deceive the World, he is by Six of the Clock in the Morning waiting upon the *Podesta*, and conducting him to the Cathedral Church.

In the mean Time, affrighted *Pomerea* runs to the Neighbours, and tells them of her Grandmother's Death: Many of them flock to see the woful Spectacle; the Covigado's of *Sprear* are acquainted of it, they send for Surgeons to visit the dead Body, who report she was both poisoned and beat to Death; they examine poor *Pomerea*, who related all she knew or saw of the Matter, they send every where to search for the Murtherer: The News of such a horrid Act as this soon flew to *Brescia*. *Alibius* counterfeiting Tears, with many Sighs, laments the Death of his Wife, and pretends such Affection to her Memory, that

that he sends Messengers every Way to find out the Author of such an Action; but notwithstanding his dissembled Tears, having a Hell in his Conscience, he fears his Daughter *Emilia* will think him to be her Mother's Murderer, very well knowing how barbarously he had used the innocent Deceased in her Presence, both by Words and Blows; and because the Corrigadors (suspecting her) had taken Sureties for her Appearance, he the better to insinuate with her, useth her with more than usual Affability, thinking if her Mouth was stopt, he need not fear.

Time the Consumer of all Things, began to wear away the Rumour of this Murder; and *Alibius* thinking himself secure, before three Months were expired, marries *Philatea*, who was brought to Bed about six Weeks afterwards; which being so remarkable, many curious Heads in that City began vehemently to suspect *Alibius* had a Hand in the Murder of his late Wife *Merilla*; but they did not dare to talk too much, because he was well beloved and respected both by the *Podesta* and all the Senators. But as Murder pierceth the Clouds, and cries to Heaven for Vengeance; so we shall find this miraculously discovered, and the Author severely punished at a Time when he thought the Storm averted; when he imagines all Rumours were over, and Peoples Tongues silent; when he thought on nothing but passing the Remainder of his Time in Merriment, and in rioting in his new Wife's Arms: I say, when he thought himself most secure, himself was the Instrument of his own Discovery.

For after he had married *Philatea*, he sends for *Bernard* to come to *Brescia*, in order to pass some Time at his House; for he had always been his dissolute Associate: *Bernard* did not want many Invitations, but he gladly goes to his old Companion, who you may be sure, rejoiced to see him, and after mutual Compliments had passed, and they had conferred together, they fell to their old way of tippling, and carousing continually together. Now it happened, that *Bernard* having drank too freely one Day without the North Gate of *Brescia*, and the Wine having overcome his Reason, he told a Countryman of *Sprear*, that he knew *Alibius*, as great as he now carried himself, was once very poor, and that he murder'd his poor Wife in the Country, to have a fine one in the City; which Words of his he repeated so often, that they were taken Notice of; and a Person among the rest acquainted with *Alibius*, went secretly and told him of it, who so ordered Matters, whether

by murdering *Bernard*, or by giving him Gold, that he was never after seen in *Brescia*.

And now *Alibius*, thinking all Suspicion vanished, converted his Affection for his Daughter *Emilia* into Contempt, and his Courtesy to Unkindness, by taking from her the greatest Part of the small Means he gave towards her Maintenance; which uncharitable and unnatural Part of his, threw this poor Woman into so great a Perplexity, as knowing in her Conscience that her Father was her Mother's Murderer, that by his Usage, she feared she in time might share her Fate; she enters into many Considerations with herself, as that, to accuse her Father would be as great a Disobedience in her, as it was cruelty in him to murder her Mother. Thus struggling between Duty and Justice, she is a long Time irresolute either to advance or retire in this her Purpose; here she consults betwixt Nature and Grace, betwixt the Laws of Heaven and Earth, what she should do, or how she should carry herself in an Affair of such Importance: It grieves her to be the Means of a Father's Death, of whom she received her Being, and yet she is unwilling to conceal her Mother's Murderer: Though Sense and Nature cannot, yet sedate Thoughts joined with Religion, will reconcile and clear up those Doubts, disperse those Clouds from our Eyes, and make us see clear, that Earth may not conceal Murder, since God receives Glory both in the Detection and Punishment of it.

Some will say, the Daughter was in the Wrong to accuse her Father: Did not he do much worse to murder her Mother? It was not a Pleasure but a Pain to *Emilia* to make the Discovery. Was not her Resolution confirm'd by her Father's sudden Marriage, and her Mother-in-law being so quickly after brought to Bed? Common Report vindicated her, and not able any longer to contain herself, she goes to the next Judge, and accuses her Father with the inhuman Murder of her Mother *Merilla*.

The Judge being a wise and grave Man, and surprized at the Story, detains *Emilia* in his House, and writes to the *Podesta* of *Brescia* about it, who receives the News on a *Saturday* Night: The next Morning he acquaints the Prefect and the Senators thereof, who repair to his House: The Circumstances prove so very strong against *Alibius*, that they all conclude to imprison him; he was at the Door standing in his rusted Gown and Velvet Cap, with his Silver Wand in his Hand, (as if he was fitter to check others than

to be controuled himself,) waiting to conduct the *Podesta*, little dreaming how near he was to Danger: He was by a Serjeant called in to speak with the *Podesta*; and although he knew himself guilty as soon as accused, yet, he puts on a bold Face, and comes before him: At his Arrival, his Velvet Cap and Silver Wand (those Ensigns of Honour and Justice) were taken from him, and consequently his Office; he was examined by those worthy Magistrates in the strictest Manner; but he, with many smooth Words, assisted by his graceful Carriage, endeavours to palliate his Crime, and pleads his intire Innocency, but in vain; they commit him close Prisoner, where he hath Time and Leisure to think on the Foulness of his Fact. The Day following, the Corrigadoes of *Sprear* sent *Emilia* to *Brescia*, where the next Day the *Podesta*, Prefect, and Senators examined her, first exhorting her to consider, that she speaks before God; and altho' *Alibius* was her earthly Father, yet he was her Heavenly: They conjure her to speak the Truth, and no more; and seeing her an illiterate Woman, they informed her of the Nature of an Oath: *Emilia* falling on her Knees, wringing her Hands, and looking stedfastly towards Heaven for some Time, had not the Power to speak: The Judge, by mild Exhortations, encourages her to speak; when she with Tears and Sighs, at last, uttereth these Words: *My Suspicion arises from this; I have often seen my Father beat my Mother most cruelly, and as often left her for Dead, vowing, if she was not so then, he would have his Desire one Time or another. Once he gave her Poison in some Milk, but she did not drink it all, so that it had not then the Power to operate, and what she left I gave to a Dog, which immediately killed him, and for which my Father corrected me; and these, my Lord, are the Reasons which makes me accuse him; and that this is the Truth, I call Heaven to Witness.* The Judges bound her to give Evidence at the great Court of the Province, and dismissed her for that Time.

In the mean Time, *Alibius* is visited in Prison by diverse of his Acquaintance; nay, some of the Senators afforded him that Honour out of Charity: They talk to him about his Crime, and persuade him to glorify God by an ample Confession, but in vain; he calls Heaven to witness his Innocency, and appeared so religious and grave in his Speeches, that he drew many of the inferior sort of People

to believe his Accusation was false; but his Hypocrisy was discovered, and his Cruelty laid open to the whole World.

For now the Time approached, when the Duke and Seignory of *Venice*, deputed and sent forth Judges to pass through the several Provinces of their Dominions to sit upon, and try all capital Offenders, and to punish them according to their Deserts: A Custom esteemed famous, not only in Christian States, but over the whole Universe! A Custom by which Justice is brought home to the Peoples Doors, and by which Justice is done on the Spot; it preserves the Peace, and exterminates all those who by their lewd and scandalous Actions endeavour to infringe it.

Thus these high and honourable Judges, (being in Number two for every Division) having dispatched their Business in *Padua*, *Vinensa*, *Verona*, and *Bergamo*, arrived in *Brescia*, in the Castle whereof they keep the Forum, or Court of Justice. And because this City is exempted from the Province, as being particularly indowed with a peculiar Jurisdiction, and honoured with many Priviledges and Prerogatives; therefore (*Merilla* having been murder'd in the Province) *Alibius* is fetched out of his first Prison, and by one of the gravest Senators deputed for that Purpose by the *Podesta* and Senate, conducted to the Castle to be arraigned; and although the said Senator seemed to have the Art of Persuasion, and used his best Oratory to draw *Alibius* to Confession and Repentance, yet it made no Impression on him; but he persevered in his Denial of the Fact, and stood upon his Innocency, and freely conversed with some of his Acquaintance, as if his Heart felt no Grief, and seemed as unconcerned as the numerous Spectators; and so vain was he, that he came to the Bar in a black Sattin Suit, and his Hair and Beard neatly combed and powdered, and with so confident a Demeanour, as if he were to receive his Enlargement and not his Sentence.

The Judges ordered his Indictment to be read, wherein he is charged with poisoning and murdering his Wife, to which he pleaded that he was no wise guilty, or any wise accessary to her Death, and with feigned Tears, seemed to lament the loss of her. The Witnesses were called, and first his own Daughter *Emilia*, who with Tears, stood firm to her former Deposition, that he had often beat her Mother almost to Death; that he had diverse Times swore her Destruction; and that she verily believed he was guilty of her Death. *Alibius*, with many a plausible Story endeavours to represent

sent his Daughter a Lunatick, or that she would take away his Life to enjoy his Estate and Effects after his Death, and runs on in an extravagant Apology for himself, and concluded, that he never was possesst of any Poison. The Judges out of their Zeal to Justice, sat patiently, and permitted him to speak without Interruption, and when he had done, they shewed him the foulness of the Fact he was accused off, and painted out to him in lively Speeches the devilish Nature and monstrous Crime of Murder, a Murder committed partly on himself; for as Man and Wife are one, so he ought rather to have cherished than any wife injured her, and that he increased his Crime the more by denying it, telling him that the Evidence was strong against him, but that as he did deny the Fact, he should have a fair Trial.

Two Apothecary's Apprentices were called, who severally affirm, that they sold him Ratsbane, and one of them in particular mentioned the Day he sold him some, which proved to be the Day before his Wife's Murder: Numerous were the Spectators, and one amongst the rest hearing the Day mentioned on which the Murder was committed, recollected with himself, that he did that Evening lend *Alibius* a Horse, and that he returned him again very dirty and tired the next Morning about Four of the Clock, and this Man mentioning of it, was called on to give it in Evidence, which he accordingly did as above. The Judges acquaint *Alibius* that it was a strong circumstantial Proof against him, and desired him to give an Account where, and in whose Company he was that Night; but he says, it was a sudden Charge, and that he could not at that Time recollect; and perseveres in his former Obstinacy, and pretended to wipe off the Apothecary's Boys Evidence by this poor Evasion, that he bought and used it only to poison Rats, and that the Man who owned the Horse was mistaken in the Day; but the Man replied, he was positive of it, because he always wrote down the Day he lent any Horse in his Book, that at the Years End he might know his Gains, and so produced his Pocket Book in Court, wherein was the Day of the Month mentioned, with this Addition; *Then lent Alibius the Podesta Beadle a Horse; and underneath, returned the next Morning.* And the honourable Judge remarked, that *Alibius* did not deny but he bought the Poison, but said he bought it to kill Rats, tho' before he declared that he never had any Poison; *Alibius* yet stood firm to his former Denial, and with many smooth Words and

and humble Gestures, endeavoured to make it appear, that he had no wise imbrued his Hands in the Blood of his Wife.

After the Jury impanelled, had amply heard as well the Witnesses against *Alibius* as his Defence for himself; and after the eldest Judge had with great Impartiality and Perspicuity summed up the Evidence, and left it to the Juries Breast, that all the World might testify that *Alibius* had a fair Trial, the Jury went out, and after a Quarter of an Hours tarrying, they return, and find him guilty of poisoning and murdering his Wife *Merilla*. As soon as they had given their Verdict, *Alibius* was taken from the Bar, and carried back to Prison; and yet, his Obstinacy did not abate, for all the Way he went, he beat his Breast; and cried, it was only the Malice of his wicked Daughter that had condemned him; and tho' many good Christians pressed him to a Confession, alledging that God was merciful to the Penitent, and severely punished the Obstinate, and such as stand in a known and willful Lye; but all they could say did not at all avail with him.

The second Morning after his Conviction, he was carried from his Prison to the Castle, and so to the Bar to receive his Sentence, where one of the Judges told him, that his hearkening to the Devil, and forsaking God, had brought him to such Misery; that his dissolute Life and bad Company had brought him to this untimely End; advised him to throw off his Hypocrisy, and think, that tho' he might deceive Men, yet God was not to be deceived; informed him that God was merciful and gracious to a Sinner that repented; that he must now cast off worldly Thoughts, and fix his Mind on Things above, and no longer to think of his Body, but take Care of his precious and immortal Soul; and so, after a learned Exhortation, he pronounceth the Sentence, that for the execrable Murder committed on his own Wife, he should hang by the Neck for the Space of one Hour 'till he was dead, and so besought the Lord to have Mercy on his Soul.

Alibius returned to Prison, and still remained obstinate, affirming to all who visited him, that he died innocently. Two Divines were ordered to attend and prepare him for another World, they seriously press him to an Acknowledgment of his Crime, and tho' they found the Devil had a strong Influence over him; yet, by the Power and Grace of their Speeches and Exhortations, they so mollified his Heart,
that

that at last they prevailed over him, being terrified with God's Justice, and encouraged by his Mercies, that with Tears and Groans he confessed the Murder of his Wife, and bitterly repented it, thanking those Godly Divines for their Charity, Care, and Zeal for the Preservation of saving his precious and immortal Soul, and doth upon his Knees, beseech them to pray unto the Lord to forgive him, and to receive him into his blest Abodes.

Some few Days afterwards, *Alibius* was conveyed to the Place of Execution, having the Favour to dye alone, and at least three Hours before the other Malefactors: An infinite Number of People of all Ranks, and both Sexes, assembled to see *Alibius* take his last Farewel of the World. At his ascending the Ladder, his fair grey Beard and comely Presence, drew Pity from the Hearts, and Tears from the Eyes of the greatest Part of the Spectators, to see that the Devil had deluded him, and so strongly enchanted him, as to lay violent Hands on his Wife, and to see so grave a Man thus untimely cast away.

His Speech was short, he confessed his Crime, and with many Tears, besought the Company to pray for his Soul; he lamented the Vanity of his Youth, and the Dissoluteness of his Age; told them, that his neglect of his Duty to God, and confederating and joining with ill Company, had brought him to that shameful End, exhorted them to take Example by him, and having solemnly freed his second Wife *Philatea* from being any way accessory, or acquainted with the Murder of his first Wife *Merilla*, and recommending his Soul into the Hands of his Saviour, and crying for Mercy, he died as penitent as he had lived Dissolute and Profane.



REFLECTIONS

On the foregoing

H I S T O R Y.

UPON the whole, we may observe, that bad Company and Drinking enticed him to a Commission of the Fact allured by Lust, and stirred up to Rage, he murdered his own Wife, and broke that Union which God had made sacred; a Union, than which none is so perfect and absolute on Earth: Charity teacheth us to love all the World, but especially those who are related to us: Religion goes a Degree further, and enjoins us to love those who hate us; therefore, to kill those who love us, and to deprive those of a Being who are ready to sacrifice their own Lives for the Preservation of ours, must needs proceed from a Devil, rather than a Man endowed and blest by Heaven with reasonable Faculties. Murder is a horrid and crying Sin; *Cain* the first Person guilty, was branded by God himself with perpetual Infamy; and God punished *David* for his Mixture of Adultery and Murder, for he caused *Uriah* to be killed, that he might enjoy his Wife. Murder is a Sin of so deep a Dye, that it leaves a Stain upon the Land where it is committed; the Scripture says, *The Land cannot be purged of Blood, but by the Blood of him that shed it*; and tho' in other Cases, the flying to the Altar secured a Man; yet, in this of willful Murder, no Refuge was to be allowed, but such a one was to be taken even from thence and delivered up to Justice. And it is yet further observeable, that the only two Precepts which the Scripture mentions, as given to *Noah* after the Flood, were both in relation to this Sin; That of not eating Blood being a Ceremony to beget in Men a greater Horror and Detestation of this Sin of Murder, and so intended for the preventing of it. The other was for the Punishment of it; *He that sheddeth Man's Blood, by Man shall his Blood be shed*; and the Reason of this Strictness is added

added in the next Words; *For in the Image of God made he Man*: So that this Sin is not only an Injury to another, but even the highest Contempt of God himself; for it is the Defacing of his Image which he hath stamped upon Man. Nay, yet further, it is usurping of God's proper Right and Authority; for it is God alone has the Right to dispose of Man's Life; 'twas he alone who gave it, and 'tis he alone has Power to take it away; so that *whosoever* murders a Man, does as it were wrest this Power out of God's Hand, which is the highest Piece of Presumption.

Let a Man think of the extream Horror of a Murderer's Conscience, for there is not any Privacy a Man can make use of in the acting this Sin, that can secure him from the Vengeance of it; for he can never shut up his own Conscience that will in spite of him be privy to the Fact, and that very often proves the Means of discovering it to the World; or if he should not do that, yet it will be such a Hell within as will be worse than Death. The Consideration of this, ought to possess a Man with the greatest Horror and Abomination of this Sin, and make him *extreamly* careful never to fall into it. To avoid it, take care that Covetousness, Ambition, Drink, or Lust, have no Dominion over you. Anger is a Madness that suffers us not to consider, or know what we do when it has once possess'd us; therefore, when we find ourselves inflamed, we ought immediately to check it before it gets too great an Ascendant over us. The Carelessness of the Soul is the Root of all the Sin we commit; and therefore, whoever intends to set upon a Christian Course, must in the first Place amend. To the doing whereof, there needs no deep Learning, or extraordinary Parts; the simplest Man living (who is not a natural Fool) hath Understanding enough for it, if he will but act in this by the same Rules of common Reason, whereby he proceeds in his Worldly Business; the Admission to Heaven is easy; *For seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.*

Unhappy Wretch, that doth himself deceive;
For tho' the Murder he perhaps conceals:
Justice, when he himself secure believes,
Doth soon o'ertake, and gently on him steals.

F I N I S.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Wash., D.C.

21712

